

century French revolutionary ideologies which, in turn, were able to bring about the birth of modern Greek nationalism.

The clearest manifestation of the dissemination of this Greek cultural tradition is the work of the diaspora colonies in education. For the disastrous period of the sixteenth century, when Greek civilization almost entirely collapsed on the mainland, Paparegopoulos, the national historian of Greece, has been able to find the names of only some 230 Greeks who might be called "scholars," or who at least possessed more than a rudimentary learning. But of this number, it should be noted, more than 170 were from the Greek community of Venice and its possessions in the Greek East, from Italy, or from elsewhere in the West. Of the remaining sixty who came from the Turkish-occupied area which today constitutes Greece, about forty-five are referred to in the documents simply as "educated clerics and monks," no other evidence about them having survived. The remaining fifteen with two exceptions, Theodosios Zygomalas and Nicholas Malaxos, are known only for their interest in liturgical and religious matters.⁸⁷ Through the munificence of the Venetian Greeks, Paparegopoulos affirms, there were subsequently established, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, schools in Italy and, most significant, in Greece itself, such as those at Athens, Patras, Patmos, still later in Thessaly and Macedonia, but above all at Ioannina in Epirus.⁸⁸

Regarding the role of the diaspora communities in education, the highest praise belongs to Venice, from which radiated the inspiration that saw the foundation of schools for the first time in centuries in many areas of Greece. As noted, the center of the Venetian community's educational activities was the Flangeneion school⁸⁹ and, specifically for higher studies, the University of Padua, which, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, became in effect *the* university of the diaspora. (Patriarchs Cyril Lukaris and Meletios Pigas, among others, studied there.)⁹⁰

Had the diaspora colonies remained insulated from contact with the Balkan peninsula, their influence might well have produced no important results for the emergence of an independent Greece. But because of its educational contribution, the diaspora helped to revive or, as some would say, to create a *new* national consciousness. In a basic sense, however, it was not new at all. For, as we have tried to show, the neo-Hellenism characteristic of the Greek state of 1821 had already appeared in the last century or so of Byzantium's life; but

instead of disappearing, this sense of nationality or ethnic individuation was preserved and in some ways developed further by the diaspora Greeks. Thus Veludes' and Paparegopoulos' remarks that the Greek community of Venice, through its work of education, constituted the seedbed of modern Greece,⁹¹ are to a considerable extent justified. Although it would be too strong to say that without the work of the diaspora the Greek Revolution would not have occurred, one may state with conviction that it would very probably have taken place later than it did.

It is my view, and I believe this point has escaped the notice of scholars of modern nationalism, that one of the factors that rendered the Greek Revolution unique, that made it the earliest to take place effectively in the nineteenth century, was precisely the educational preparation for nationhood provided by the diaspora communities. This was characteristic, it would seem, of no other European people then aspiring to national liberation (one might recall in this respect the only recently founded state of Israel). Thus the words of Kolokotronis, quoted at the start of this chapter, with their emphasis on the educational significance of the diaspora Greek scholars, seem, in the light of the material presented, to bear out the prophetic words of Bessarion linking together Hellenic education and a sense of nationhood. The apparently sudden emergence of a new Greek nation in 1821 can thus be explained not only by the persistence of the Christian Orthodox tradition, by the ideological influences of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, and by internal conditions in the Balkans resulting from the Turkish Empire's decline, but, no less important, by the contribution of the Greeks of the diaspora, who for almost four centuries *were* the Greek nation in exile.⁹²

Crete: Halfway Point between East and West in the Renaissance

Not too long ago scholars naïvely believed that one, perhaps even the basic, cause of the Italian Renaissance was the revival of Greek learning resulting from the influx to the West of Byzantine refugee scholars fleeing the Turkish conquest of Constantinople in 1453. However, the great advances made in Renaissance studies have shown conclusively that, not only must the date for the appearance of the Renaissance's principal intellectual factor—humanism—be pushed back long before 1453, but that at its inception the humanist movement was essentially of Latin rather than Greek inspiration. Nonetheless, despite these qualifications, it may plausibly be affirmed that, insofar as the cultural development of the Renaissance is concerned, the factor which more than any other served to widen its intellectual horizon was the reception and increasing use by the humanists of original texts of new or unknown works of Greek antiquity, especially those of literary and philosophic content. Now this learning, hitherto largely lacking in the West, could have come from only one place, its repository for one thousand years, the Byzantine East, particularly from its capital city of Constantinople and from Thessalonika, and to a certain extent from southern Italy, where up to at least the sixteenth century some Greek texts and a knowledge of Greek were preserved.

But what was the avenue or avenues for the transmission of this Greek heritage? It is still generally accepted as true, though we must certainly deemphasize the importance of the Greek refugees for the *origins* of Italian humanism, that most of the Greek literary works, the Platonic corpus, and even certain writings of Aristotle did come to the West in this manner, though during the period extending before, as well as after, 1453.

As we examine this broad flow of Greeks moving westward, a *veritable* diaspora, we see that it tends to follow certain lines, to

form a kind of pattern. And it is this pattern of transmission from East to West, or rather one neglected aspect of it, that will be my focus of attention here. Aside from a few preliminary Greek figures (almost always overlooked by Renaissance historians) like the Cretan Peter Philarges, who came in 1357 to Padua to study and then later was actually elected pope as Alexander V,¹ and Simon Autumano, who briefly taught Greek in Florence (1380–81),² the emigration of Greek scholars to the West tended to concentrate at three important centers. The first and best known of these was the Florence of the Medici. There the formal beginning of this period of Florentine primacy in Greek studies is accredited to one Greek, the nobleman Manuel Chrysoloras.

Originally dispatched to the West by the Byzantine emperor in order to seek military and political aid against the Turks for beleaguered Constantinople, in 1396–97 Chrysoloras was invited by the Florentine government to teach Greek at its *studium*. As the Italian humanist Leonardo Bruni put it, a little exaggeratedly though more or less correctly, this was the first time in seven hundred years that the Greek language had been taught in the West—that is, since the time of the Germanic invasions! And in actual fact the systematic study of Greek language and literature during the Renaissance may be said to begin at this time. Indeed, because of the large number of students he taught, who in turn became devotees of Greek learning, Chrysoloras succeeded in making Florence, from 1396 to about 1490 or so, the first great center for Greek studies in western Europe.³

A second important area for Greek study developed a little later, in the mid-fifteenth century in Rome, in part concurrent with the establishment there of the Greek cardinal Bessarion after the abortive Council of Florence and his appointment as chief minister to the pope. Under the patronage of the learned Bessarion, there soon gathered in the papal curia an entire circle of Greek and also some Latin scholars, including George of Trebizond, all of whom were interested in the furtherance of Greek studies.⁴ They made some rather important translations from Greek into Latin. These two phases of the development and transmission of Greek learning in the West, in Florence and Rome, are of course well known. But there is a third phase which follows and which, in certain ways, is more important than either of the other two for the dissemination of Greek learning throughout the West in general. This period, extending from the last decade of the fifteenth century through the first half or so of the

sixteenth, is connected with the city of Venice. During that time Venice took over the primacy from Florence to become the leading center in all Europe not only for Greek studies but for intellectual activity in general.⁵

As I have shown elsewhere, one important factor in this development, hitherto neglected by Western historians, was the existence in Venice of a large, thriving Greek colony. And from its population, such scholars as the great Italian printer of Greek, Aldus Manutius, a prime mover in this Venetian period, could draw to secure the skilled labor so necessary for the collation of Greek texts and their editing for the press.⁶ Not that all the inhabitants of the Greek community were learned or that all Greek émigré scholars actually lived within the confines of this colony. The community was nevertheless a magnet that attracted most Greeks, especially cultured ones, to Venice. They termed it, in fact, their second homeland, and frequently they visited friends or relatives there. Some of them taught in the school established by the now formally organized Greek community, in the nearby chancery of Venice, or perhaps even at the famous University of Padua, which in 1405 had become the possession of Venice.

Despite this rather lengthy introduction, it is not my purpose here to delineate the history of the Greek colony of Venice, which I have tried to do in some detail in the previous chapter. Rather, I want to discuss the significance, in the process of the dissemination of Greek letters from East to West and especially from Venice to the rest of the West, of an area insufficiently studied in this connection: the island of Crete. Today the study of the archaeology of ancient Crete is attracting much attention; and historians of modern Greece are increasingly aware of the part played by Crete in the emergence of the modern Greek nation. But how many scholars are cognizant of the astonishing number of intellectuals and painters produced by that Aegean island in the period from about 1400 to 1600? From that small barren island literally scores of boys or young men went forth who were later to play a significant role in the diffusion of Greek letters. Along with its choice oils and wines, which were justly famous, Crete exported scholars and even painters (El Greco, to name only one) who held positions of influence in the world of letters and art, in areas extending all the way from Spain eastward to Russia.

Contrary to what is usually believed, Crete was not altogether barren intellectually in the early fifteenth century, some degree of

culture having remained from the Byzantine and Venetian periods. But its emergence to genuine importance begins with the emigration to the island of many Byzantine intellectuals fleeing the Ottoman occupation of Constantinople. At that time, indeed since 1204, Crete had been under Venetian domination, and it was to remain so until 1669. Hence it was, and this is a very important point, the only substantial Greek-speaking area not as yet to fall under the yoke of the Turks. But the narrow environment of Crete, which lacked institutions of higher learning and possessed little wealth, offered little opportunity to ambitious men of letters who might seek professional recognition, say, by occupying a university chair. Thus, after a residence of some length on the island (where some of them might study at the *scriptorium* newly established at Candia by Constantinople-born Michael Apostolis), many intellectuals, either born in Constantinople or in Crete itself, began to look elsewhere for employment. And quite naturally their gaze fell upon Venice, the master of the island and at this time, perhaps, Europe's richest city. Soon after 1453, therefore, we see numerous Cretans moving to and establishing themselves in the city of the lagoons, often settling in the Greek quarter located only a few hundred yards from St. Mark's Basilica itself.⁷

At this point I shall discuss this movement by concentrating on the careers and activities in Venice of some of the more important of these Cretans—men of letters whose work made Crete, in the transmission of Greek learning, a kind of halfway point between the old, perishing Byzantine world and the rising Italian centers of humanistic endeavor.

What offered many opportunities to the skilled Hellenist was the developing Venetian interest in Greek literature, itself fostered by the humanistic ideals of Florence and nearby Padua, and now especially furthered by the demands of the newly established Greek press. In Venice a Hellenist could work either as a scribe for a wealthy patron, as a teacher in a Venetian school, at the nearby University of Padua, or, finally and most commonly, as a typesetter or editor in one of Venice's numerous Greek presses. The most famous of all was the workshop of Aldus Manutius. But there also existed a number of Cretan presses, which have hitherto attracted little attention.

In the history of printing it was a Cretan of Latin parentage, Demetrius Damilas, who in 1476 at Milan printed what scholars have usually considered to be the first entirely Greek book published in Europe, the *Erotemata* of the Byzantine Constantine Lascaris. Not

long afterwards, in 1486 in Venice, the Greek Cretans Laonikos and Alexander produced what I take to be Venice's first Greek books, the *Psalter* and Homer's *Batrachomyomachia*.⁸ It should be observed that these appeared almost a decade before the first production of the great Italian printer, Aldus Manutius, to whom Western scholars have usually awarded the credit for initiating the work of the Venetian Greek press. It is very possible, indeed, and this is my own view, that Aldus's aim of printing for the first time all the major Greek classical works was anticipated by the Cretan printer, Zacharias Calliergis.

Calliergis was, like his fellow-countrymen, a patriotic Greek, as is shown by the fact that his first book, the *Etymologicum magnum* (the greatest of all Byzantine dictionaries), was produced in imitation of Byzantine manuscripts, utilizing as his printer's marks the Byzantine double-headed eagle and manuscript ornamentation. Calliergis employed on his staff only Cretan compatriots. But though his works were of the finest execution, often surpassing in quality even those of Aldus, Calliergis went out of business, evidently for financial reasons;⁹ whereupon, it should be noted, his workmen were hired en masse by his friend and rival Aldus. This did not end Calliergis' career, incidentally, for he is later to be found working in Rome, where he was attracted by the promotion of humanistic learning on the part of the Medici pope, Leo X. There in the papal capital he established the first Greek press, printing among other things a valuable edition of Pindar, Theocritus, Greek liturgical works, and others. The Calliergian edition of Pindar, because of its important scholia, was more significant than the earlier Aldine *editio princeps*.¹⁰

The career of the great Aldus is, of course, too well known to require discussion here in any detail. Suffice it to point out that in his so-called Aldine Academy of thirty-six members, more than a dozen were Greek-born, most of whom were Cretans employed by him. Of his many collaborators, Aldus, in his own words, prized above all the aid of Marcus Musurus. This Cretan, as earlier noted, edited for Aldus no less than eleven or twelve first editions of the ancient Greek masterpieces—including the works of Plato, Aristophanes, Hesychius, and others. Musurus had gone to Florence from his native island as a young man. There he had studied Greek literature, primarily with the famous Byzantine teacher Janus Lascaris.¹¹

Musurus' knowledge of Greek was phenomenal, as is clearly attested in the text of his many editions, some emendations of which,

either intuitive or based on older Palaeologan, Byzantine tradition, especially of his predecessors Demetrios Triklinios and Manuel Moschopoulos of the fourteenth century, are still accepted by scholars.¹² Especially unique was his knowledge of the difficult meter of ancient Greek lyric poetry and tragedy, which was quantitative rather than qualitative, as in modern western European languages.¹³ His famous edition of Plato's *Dialogues* (which, by the way, was at least as important as Marsilio Ficino's translation of the Platonic corpus into Latin) contains as a preamble a poem addressed to his patron, Pope Leo X. In this, Musurus apostrophizes Plato and pleads to the pope for the liberation of his forebear's ancient homeland of Constantinople from the Turks. (Compare this plea with that in the Byzantine Chalcondyles' address, chap. 13 below.) Although the content of the poem is not too interesting to us, the remarkable polish and elegance, the sheer technical skill of composition, which utilizes the almost forgotten quantitative meter of the ancient Greeks, is such that it may be ranked as the finest Greek poem to have been composed since the time of the ancient world.¹⁴

However important his editing work for Aldus, no less significant in disseminating Greek learning was Musurus' career as professor of Greek at the University of Padua and subsequently in Venice itself. Around him gathered a very large number of students, potential humanists we might say, who assembled from all areas of western Europe to hear his lectures. When these men returned to their homelands, they carried back with them the inspiration and knowledge received from Musurus. His period of instruction of Greek in Venice—where he taught, among other things, the Greek tragedies and lyric poetry as well as Aristotle's *Poetics* (a fact that has been little noted)¹⁵—constitutes an important landmark in the development of Western Greek studies, a landmark comparable perhaps only to the success achieved by Chrysoloras the century before in Florence.

Let me enumerate a few of Musurus' students, all names well known in the development of Renaissance learning: Lazzaro Bonamico, Raffael Reggio, Girolamo Aleandro, who later helped to inaugurate Greek teaching in Paris, John Conon, possibly the true founder of Greek studies in Germany, Germain de Brie and Jean de Pins of France, Janus Vertessy from Hungary, Gelenius from Prague who later went to Basle, and many others.¹⁶ Best known of all is the great Erasmus, who tells us himself that he heard Musurus' lectures. (He called Musurus "very skilled in both Greek and Latin.") On

intimate terms with Musurus, Erasmus borrowed rare or still unknown Greek manuscripts from his library,¹⁷ including works of Plato, Plutarch, Hermogenes,¹⁸ Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, and the valuable scholia on Homer of Eustathius of Thessalonika (so vital for the manuscript tradition of Homer), as well as the large collection of ancient Greek and Byzantine sayings compiled by the Cretan Michael Apostolis. The latter collection was secured by Erasmus from Michael's son, the Cretan humanist Arsenios Apostolis, who also lived in Venice at this time and was associated with the Aldine circle.¹⁹

As shown elsewhere, much of this new material Erasmus incorporated into the famous Aldine edition of his celebrated *Adages*. It was this work, critics agree, that was primarily responsible for bringing him his reputation as Europe's leading scholar. Erasmus is generally regarded by historians as the chief link between the Italian and Northern phases of the movement of the Renaissance. But scholars often fail to realize to what extent his work in Greek scholarship (which to him was much more important than Latin), was indebted to personal contacts with his Cretan friends in Venice, especially with Musurus, for whom he had a great regard and affection.

Musurus is certainly the most important Cretan scholar to appear in the West. Indeed, it is my impression that he was probably the Hellenist with the widest and most perfect knowledge of Greek language and literature to appear during the entire period of the Western Renaissance.²⁰ Musurus died in 1515 but other, though less talented, Cretans took up his work in Venice. The emigration of Cretans to Venice, in fact, continued throughout the entire sixteenth and even early seventeenth centuries. One might mention here, at the end of the sixteenth, still another scholar, able but again little known to Western historians, Maximos Margounios. Margounios was a Cretan bishop-humanist residing in the Greek colony in Venice, who not only sponsored a new approach with regard to union of the Greek and Latin churches, but wrote poetry and published first editions of Greek or Byzantine texts, such as that of John Chrysostom. He also had many contacts by way of correspondence with a large number of Western humanists in England, France, Italy, and especially those in Tübingen, Germany, including Martin Crusius.²¹

As more and more specialists in Greek appeared in Venice from the East and as Latin Hellenists, too, became better trained by these same Greeks, what may be termed a surplus of Hellenists developed

in Venice. Hence, many now decided to emigrate to the culturally undeveloped areas of the North. There, especially in France and Spain, Greek printing had not yet made its appearance, or was just on the point of doing so. So, Cretans, one by one or in small groups, gradually made their way northward to find employment and new outlets for their talents. Usually, however, they would first pass through Venice, that funnel, one might say, for the passage of Greeks coming from the East.

One of the first Cretan intellectuals to appear in Spain was Demetrius Ducas. Summoned to Spain around 1513 by Cardinal Ximenes from the Aldine Academy to teach Greek for the first time at that prelate's new University of Alcalá, Ducas was also called upon to participate in Ximenes' great project, the editing for the press of the famous Complutensian Polyglot Bible. Meanwhile, Ducas on his own published the first two Greek books to appear in Spain.²² Moreover, he not only edited (as is well known) the Septuagint Greek text of the Old Testament for Ximenes but was probably (as is still little known) the chief editor for the Greek text of the much more important New Testament. This latter point I have tried to show primarily on the basis of a comparison of the Greek and Latin introductions to the Greek text.²³ Believing the Greek an exact equivalent of the Latin, scholars have hitherto read only the Latin introduction and neglected the Greek. But the Greek contains some significant phrases omitted from or altered in the Latin text. Where the Latin (both introductions are written by the editor or editors) records "it seems to us," the Greek reads "it seems to me." The Greek text also contains a reference to certain "ancient inscriptions on stones in Constantinople," which most probably only a Greek like Ducas, and not his Spanish collaborators, could have seen or even known about. Moreover, it is most interesting that of the five epigrams placed at the end of the introduction by the editors, that of Ducas precedes those of the others. Finally, the nuances of style reflected in the introduction would induce one to believe that only a person highly skilled in Greek, like Ducas, could have composed it. All of which considerations lead to the conclusion that Ducas was probably primarily responsible for the edition of the basic Greek text of the Complutensian New Testament.²⁴

The name of Ducas has been long confused by scholars with those of at least two other Demetriois; indeed, one important Spanish scholar, who makes only a brief reference to his teaching at Alcalá,

calls him Lucas! Hence no biography was written about him until the main facts of his career were established. The last mention I could find of him was as "publicus professor" of Greek in 1526-27, in the papal University of Rome, and as editor of several Greek liturgical works, including those of Sts. Chrysostom and Basil.²⁵ It is interesting to observe that, like others of his Cretan compatriots, Ducas, too, was interested in publishing Byzantine liturgical works. This phenomenon, the publication by Greek scholars in the West of Greek liturgical works, is a phase of the Renaissance that needs investigation. Ducas' contributions in particular have been almost entirely ignored by modern scholars, except for brief mentions of him in Legrand's *Bibliographie Hellénique*.²⁶

Other Cretans followed the pioneer efforts of Ducas in Spain, including several Greek painters, all of whom were simply known as "Greco," the Greek. The climax came in the person of the great El Greco of Toledo, who was born Domenikos Theotocopoulos at or near the Cretan town of Candia, today called Herakleion. El Greco's career is well known and there is no space here to delineate it again in detail. Suffice it to emphasize a few little-known or completely unknown points: that he was preceded in Spain by several other Greek painters (for example, in Barcelona); that there already existed a Greek colony in Toledo before his arrival; and that (as recent scholarship has shown) El Greco's technique of painting was probably largely formed before he went to Spain and even before he went to Venice.²⁷ A recently discovered notarial document signed by "Menegos Theotokopoulos" (*Menegos* is the Greek diminutive for *Domenikos*), "Maestro" of painting, shows that he was evidently still living in Candia, the capital city of Crete, in his twenty-fifth year and had achieved the title of "Maestro."²⁸ Hence the common belief that he went to Venice to learn painting at the early, still very immature age of eighteen must be discarded, and we should probably instead believe that he had already acquired a good deal of his remarkable technique of painting on Crete, which was still under Byzantine and Venetian cultural influences. Thus the view must be abandoned that all or most of El Greco's technique and style was acquired after he emigrated to Venice and Spain. This new view is reinforced when we observe certain striking similarities in paintings of the so-called Macedonian and Metropolitan schools on the one hand, and in certain works of El Greco himself²⁹ (see above, pp. 20, 31, and esp. 90). But let us return now to the sphere of letters.

In France the first appearance of Cretan émigrés can probably be connected with the rising French interest in humanistic studies at the end of the fifteenth century. We have already mentioned the isolated, anticipatory case of the Cretan, Petros Philarges, who in 1357, at the age of seventeen, became a Franciscan. (St. Francis, by the way, is the only Latin saint to be venerated by Greeks, specifically on the island of Crete.) He then went to study in Padua, and later became an important professor of Scholasticism at the University of Paris.³⁰ Finally, he was elected pope at the Council of Pisa (1409), the only Greek since the early medieval period to attain this supreme ecclesiastical post, though in the fifteenth century the great Greek cardinal Bessarion missed election to the papal throne twice only by the narrowest of margins.

Also in the fifteenth century, a Cretan printer named John Kres appeared in Brittany and set up a press. But Greeks, and especially Cretans, did not go in greater numbers to Paris until the noble Byzantine, Janus Lascaris, had firmly established Greek studies there. He had gone to Paris after the French invasion of Italy in 1494.³¹ In 1535 the post of librarian of the French Royal Library at Fontainebleau was awarded to the Cretan Angelos Vergikios. Vergikios, the most important Cretan to appear in France, had first settled in Venice, and came to Paris possibly at the invitation of the French ambassador to Venice, Jean de Pins. Rising steadily in his profession of scribe, Vergikios was finally appointed *écrivain ordinaire* (official scribe) to the king himself. Besides this, he taught to supplement his income. As noted earlier, he copied many important manuscripts in a hand so beautiful that the words "to write like an angel" are supposed (though probably wrongly) to apply to him. Some modern scholars believe that the original letters cut for the royal Greek press in France by Garamont and then by Henry Stephanus were modeled on the handwriting of Vergikios.³² (Similarly, it was formerly believed that the Aldine "Italic" script was modeled on the calligraphy of Musurus.) Other Cretans worked with Angelos in Paris, including his son Nicholas, who had been born in Crete. Nicholas knew French so well that he could write competent French poetry and mingled with the famous literary group called the *Pléiade*.

England, too, had its share of Greek refugees, George Hermonymos, Andronicos Callistos, John Servopoulos—though it is difficult in every case to establish who was born a Cretan.³³ There is evidence,

in any event, of considerable trading activity between England and Crete in this period, not only in wines and oils but in other products, such as cloth.³⁴ And there is little doubt that a scholar or two must have followed in the wake of this commercial activity.

In Germany there are also traces of Cretans, especially of copyists like John Episkopopoulos and certain printers of Greek who appeared at the Council of Trent.³⁵ There are records, too, of Cretans who went to the Slavic areas farther eastward, including Russia, the Ukraine, Poland, and the Balkans and Turkey. And the Cretan patriarch of Alexandria, Meletios Pegas, shortly after 1593 wrote to and urged the Russian tsar Theodore to establish a Greek school and printing press in Moscow.³⁶

One Cretan whose career is so extraordinary that it deserves treatment at greater length is Franciscus Portus. Though he was born in Rethymno, Crete, his forebears had originally come from Vicenza, Italy. He was a nonconformist with a caustic train of mind. Like other Cretans he gravitated early to Venice, studying philosophy at the University of Padua and teaching Greek in the city's Greek colony. But he soon found employment at the famous Renaissance court of Modena, where he taught Greek. Leaving Modena, where he was suspected of Protestant sympathies, he enjoyed a reputable career as professor of Greek at Ferrara. After wandering for a time in Europe, he finally settled down, in 1561, in Geneva, Switzerland. There for two decades, in that center of Calvinism, he taught Greek with great *éclat* at the municipal academy. Geneva, in fact, became a notable center of Greek studies, in large part through his efforts. One of his pupils was the celebrated philologist Isaac Casaubon, who succeeded him in his Greek chair. In Geneva many important Greek editions and Latin commentaries of such authors as Pindar, Apollonius, Sophocles, Xenophon, Thucydides, Aristotle, Euripides, and Hermogenes, were published by Portus. (His commentaries on and edition of Homer, by the way, are especially important and are still of some use today.)³⁷ There he enjoyed the close friendship of Theodore Beza and even of Calvin himself. Portus, in fact, wrote polemical pamphlets supporting the Calvinist cause against the French king and the Catholics. He was, so far as I can tell, the only Greek intellectual who converted to Calvinism, if we except the celebrated but questionable case of the seventeenth-century patriarch of Constantinople Cyril Lukaris.³⁸ Portus, extraordinary family included his Cretan-born son, Emilius,

later professor of Greek at Lausanne and Heidelberg in Germany, and a nephew, John Casimatis of Crete, who achieved fame as a poet at Ferrara.³⁹

In the careers of the many Cretan Hellenists mentioned—unfortunately we have had time to allude only briefly to the names of one or two Cretan painters—we may see the significance of the role played by Cretans in the diffusion of Greek scholarship to the West. Like the émigrés of the early period, their movements, too, seemed to follow a certain pattern. First, as emphasized earlier, they moved from Crete to Venice, and from there, as greater opportunity beckoned, they went to the North. It is striking, as Greek studies developed and inevitably Greek presses appeared, that the names of Cretans are to be associated with almost all of these early presses—in Spain with Ducas, in Paris with Vergikios, in Geneva with Portus, and earlier with Damilas in Florence, with Laonikos and Alexander in Venice, and with Calliergis in Rome. In the corollary field of teaching, so important for diffusing Greek at a time when the West still had an imperfect knowledge of the literary works of ancient Greece, some of the greatest Greek teachers were Cretans. The most influential of all was Musurus, and, as noted, the scores of embryonic humanists who heard him lecture, on their later return to their homelands went back in the capacity of bearers, or in some cases even of pioneers, of Greek studies.

More research remains to be done on the careers of many lesser-known Cretans in this diaspora.⁴⁰ And when this task has been accomplished a more complete picture of the activities and contributions of the Cretans in the West will be provided. One may make a few generalizations now, however, by analyzing the lives of the Cretans already mentioned. All of these men carried with them not only ancient Hellenic learning but the methodology, the pedagogy, used in the Byzantine schools of Constantinople and Crete. This is a fact that to date has been rarely noted. And it is deserving of special study to find out in what ways the passing of ancient learning through the filter of Byzantium affected it—in other words, to ascertain the influence of Byzantine methods of teaching and interpretation on Western ones.

Another factor that should not be overlooked is the pervasive patriotism of these Cretans for their race and island, and the degree to which it served as an inspiration to them to preserve their own heritage for future generations of Greeks—all in the light of the fact,

as they themselves often mention, that Greek learning was in danger of being lost in the East under the Turkish occupation.⁴¹

And, finally, one cannot overlook the influence on these Cretans of the Venetian environment, a significant factor, of course, in Crete itself from the time of the Venetian occupation of the island in 1204. As Western scholars are almost entirely unaware, later in the seventeenth century there was to be a remarkable literary renaissance on Crete itself; and this appears to have been the product of Venetian-Byzantine cultural amalgamation, which produced a true hybrid Cretan-Venetian culture.⁴²

To conclude, then, in the light of our presentation, I think it may be said that the basic contribution of the Cretan intellectuals of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was the forging of connecting links between the Hellenism of the old Byzantine East and the rising, youthful Hellenism of the Renaissance West. In this way, the island of Crete, through the work of its distinguished sons, served as an important halfway point between East and West. And as such, Crete during the Renaissance played a significant, if still inadequately appreciated, role in the process of the diffusion of Greek letters, not only to Italy, but—especially from Venice—throughout other areas of the Western world.

San Bernardino of Siena and the Greeks at the Council of Florence (1438-39)

Many celebrated figures of the Italian Renaissance appeared at the Council of Florence, doubtless the greatest confrontation, ecclesiastically and intellectually speaking, between the medieval Byzantine and Latin worlds. Leonardo Bruni, Pier Paolo Vergerio, Ambrogio Traversari, and Nicholas of Cusa, among others, represented the Latins; and Gemistos Pletho, Bessarion, George Scholarios, Mark of Ephesus, and others, the Greeks. To this significant group of humanists and clerics who participated in the religious and intellectual exchanges (which one modern scholar has termed a veritable "seminar" for the Western humanists),¹ we might also add the name of the foremost Western "popular" preacher of the day, Bernardino.

San Bernardino of Siena, though an evangelical preacher noted more for religious fervor than for intellectual capacity, nevertheless had more than a slight interest in classical learning. This, in fact, he made skillful use of, often incorporating allusions and quotations from ancient classical authors into his popular sermons, delivered in the open air before huge crowds of Siennese and Florentines, in order not only to reach a wider audience of educated as well as less literate people but to increase the rhetorical impact of his preaching. It is not our purpose here to determine whether, or to what degree, Bernardino was a humanist (a thorny problem depending in considerable part on questions of definition).² Rather, I shall discuss the fact of his presence at the council—a circumstance hitherto observed by only a few scholars.³ In addition, I shall adduce another little-known allusion to him from the work of a leading fifteenth-century Byzantine historian; and, finally, an attempt will be made to reconstruct the possible influence of Bernardino on the Greeks at the council.

Bernardino's rhetorical skill in preaching, that is, his ability to move his audience, was almost legendary throughout Italy. As

founder of the Observance, a more rigorous group of Franciscans than the larger, traditional group of Conventuals, he was hardly less known for his emphasis on right living and for his sharp criticism of the sinfulness and corruption of the life of the worldly Florentines and Sienese.⁴ Many of his characteristics remind one of his earlier Franciscan predecessor, St. Bonaventura, who in 1274 had participated in a similar unionist council between Latins and Greeks, that of Lyons.

Bonaventura, who there had replaced St. Thomas Aquinas as principal spokesman for the Western side in whatever discussions were to take place (Thomas actually died on his way to Lyons), evidently, like his later counterpart Bernardino, through private conversations and the sincerity and force of his personality, had impressed the Greek delegation. The Greeks, it is reported, affectionately referred to Bonaventura as "Eutychios," a near-literal Greek rendering of Bonaventura. We are told that Greeks, conversing in private sessions with Bonaventura, were attracted by the magnetism of his personality.⁵ Bonaventura apparently knew something of contemporary Greek theology, having written two small pieces on the basic theological and liturgical questions of the filioque and the azymes.⁶ At Lyons, however (unlike later at Florence), no public, official disputations had taken place between the two sides, a primary reason for the Greek people's subsequent rejection of the validity of the Council of Lyons. The Council of Lyons had, in fact, been almost predestined to failure, the then Byzantine emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus seeking religious union primarily from motives of political expediency, and the pope basically in order to exalt papal authority through submission of the Greek church to Rome.

By the time of Florence, the political and military situation had become even more threatening, indeed almost hopeless, for the Greeks; for Constantinople was now faced by an almost perpetual siege by the Ottoman Turks. Only gradually did the Greeks—or more exactly, a small minority of them—come to realize that military aid, and therefore hope for salvation from the Turks, could come only at the price of ecclesiastical submission to Rome. It is, accordingly, in the context of this set of circumstances that, at the request of Pope Eugenius IV, many Latins, including Bernardino, appeared in 1439 in Florence to meet with the Greeks in council. A host of Westerners, along with a huge seven-hundred-man Greek delegation, therefore

assembled, first at Ferrara and later at Florence, to which city the council was moved for various reasons.⁸

Bernardino's name is not mentioned in the official or semiofficial acts of the council, neither in the so-called *Acta Graeca* nor in the private Latin account of Andrea of Santa Croce. Moreover, the primary Greek historian of the Florentine council, the Grand Ecclesiarch of St. Sophia, Sylvester Syropoulos, also fails to mention him.⁹ Since Bernardino was famed much more for his preaching than for his theological acumen, it would not be surprising if he did not participate (at least not publicly) in the abstruse arguments over questions of the filioque, azymes, purgatory, and the problem of papal supremacy over the Greek church. Nonetheless, as vicar-general of the Franciscan Observantists, we can accept the fact that he was invited by the pope to attend the council, along with heads of other Western religious orders.

This is corroborated by an anonymous Franciscan account included in a collection edited by the sixteenth-century Carthusian chronicler, Laurentius Surius (in his *Vita Sancti Bernardini Senensis*), as quoted in the seventeenth-century, more or less official history of the Franciscan order, the *Annales Minorum* of Lucas Waddingus.¹⁰ As the anonymous Franciscan records: "now by the example of his life, now by private talks and public sermons" Bernardino was able "to help bring the Greeks to union." Carried away by admiration for Bernardino, the chronicler goes on to say that, though Bernardino knew no Greek, he "reflected on the precious boon granted to the Apostles by our Lord, the ability to speak in languages." Then, the account continues, Bernardino, murmuring a prayer, ascended the pulpit of the Florence cathedral, and after suddenly and miraculously receiving this gift of tongues, began to preach in Greek, instructing the Greeks in the Catholic faith with so much learning that all marveled and said "he knew Greek no less well than if he were born in Greece." In explanation the Franciscan chronicler offers only this simple line: "Then God was moving his tongue and speaking through him."¹¹

We can perhaps appreciate what appears to be the chronicler's obvious exaggeration when we recall the great esteem in which he must have held his famous coreligionist Bernardino. But there appears to be only one other reference, and that oblique, in the sources on Bernardino's interest in Greek. This is mentioned as

occurring in 1423, at which time, we are told, he was present at lectures of the great Italian Hellenist, Guarino of Verona.¹² But in all probability Bernardino heard only a few of Guarino's lectures and, if he had acquired any knowledge of Greek, it was only a few words or halting phrases.¹³ Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that this faculty of the "gift of tongues" (rather than "glossolalia," a kind of gibberish) was, in this period, sometimes attributed to other saints, including a number of famous Franciscans. For example, in a collection of medieval English Franciscan accounts, we read of the fourteenth-century "John of England, a Franciscan monk [who] went to Sclavonia where he preached the word of God in the Illyrick language by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, having no knowledge of that tongue [but] by the gift of tongues."¹⁴

From the similarity of circumstances and expressions used in these two accounts, that of the anonymous Franciscan on Bernardino, and that of the anonymous medieval English Franciscan on John of England, one may hazard the suggestion that reference to acquisition of the gift of tongues may have been a kind of *topos* in medieval Franciscan accounts. The imputation of the divine gift of tongues, attached to the names of charismatic Franciscans by sometimes overzealous Franciscan admirers, reminds one of the early Western medieval practice of hagiographers who often indiscriminately transferred "stock" miracles from the life of one saint to another.¹⁵ In any event, it would appear to be outside the realm of possibility that Bernardino could have addressed the Greeks in a discourse in their own language. Certainly he could not have engaged in effective argument with them in Greek on the technically abstruse points of theology or ecclesiology at issue at the time.

On the other hand, there is nothing to prevent us from believing that Bernardino could easily have made use of others, Latins or Greeks, to act as interpreters for him. We know that in Florence men were present who were learned in both languages ("in utriusque lingua"), such as the Latin Camaldolese, Ambrogio Traversari, and Leonardo Bruni of Arezzo; and a number of Greek prounionists: the Archbishop Bessarion of Nicaea, Archbishop Andreas of Latin-held Rhodes, and Nicholas Secundinus—the two latter officially employed as interpreters by the papal Curia.¹⁶ Though the precise method of their function is not entirely clear, Bernardino would certainly have had recourse to them had he wished to converse with any of the Greeks, which seems very likely.

It is of interest that the great humanist Lorenzo Valla, who was also present in Florence (incidentally, he composed a treatise on the much debated question of the procession of the Holy Spirit—filioque—in which he seemed to support the Greek view),¹⁷ calls Bessarion “in Rome the most Latin of the Greeks and in Constantinople the most Greek of the Latins [*Latinorum graecissimus, Graecorum latinissimus*].” This undoubtedly referred primarily to Bessarion’s linguistic proficiency in the two tongues. Bessarion, one of the leading Greek personalities in Florence, after being named a cardinal of the church by the pope, was still later appointed to head a papal commission which finally approved the canonization of Bernardino. This fact could well suggest previous contacts in Florence between Bessarion and Bernardino.¹⁸

That Bernardino’s reputation remained in the memory of at least some Greeks after Florence may perhaps be evidenced by the near-contemporary Byzantine historian, Laonicus Chalcondyles, who, in his well-known *History of the Turks* (in Greek), mentions him in a passage. In this account, which reveals Chalcondyles as a humanist-imitator of the language and style of Thucydides, Chalcondyles’ primary concern was to exalt the deeds of the Turkish conqueror of Constantinople, his master and employer, Mehmet II.¹⁹ But Laonikos thereby sought, it seems, not only to curry favor with the sultan but to explain to his very troubled Greek compatriots (as the ancient Greek historian Polybius did centuries before with regard to the rise of Rome and decline of Greece) the equally remarkable rise to eminence of Renaissance Italy and the total destruction of the Byzantine state, in particular the loss of their “God-guarded” capital, Constantinople. For in the terrible catastrophe of 1453 most Byzantines were firmly convinced that they were being punished by God for their sins.²⁰

Chalcondyles, in his short but fascinating excursus on Bernardino, affirms that after Bernardino’s death many churches in Italy were dedicated to him, statues even being erected in his honor.²¹ As a pupil at Mistra in the Peloponnese, of the celebrated Byzantine philosopher Gemistos Pletho (at Florence Pletho had dazzled the Italian humanists with his exposition of the Platonic dialogues, including his famous explication, “On the Differences between Plato and Aristotle”), Chalcondyles may have heard about the sessions at Florence from Pletho, Bessarion, or, no less likely, from his own cousin, the Athenian humanist Demetrius Chalcondyles, who was

later to become far better known in Italy than Laonikos. At this time Demetrius had not yet gone to Italy, but in 1448 he would go to teach Greek at Perugia University; later, in 1463 as we shall see, he became the first occupant of the chair of Greek studies at Padua University; and, subsequently, he taught Greek in Florence and Milan.²² To return to Laonikos Chalcondyles—in his account he drew an analogy between Bernardino, the Italian saint, and a hero (*heroi*) of old, affirming that in erudition Bernardino ranked among "the first" (*ta prota*) in the West. As the Greek passage reads, "[Bernardino] reached the heights both in wisdom and contemplation."²³

The fact that the anonymous Franciscan probably exaggerated in his account of Bernardino should not induce us to dismiss the mention of Bernardino's presence at the council peremptorily. We may, in fact, draw a useful inference from this—that Bernardino's example of piety and his vivid sermons (public or private and whether completely understood or not) probably exerted some beneficial influence on the Greeks. The Greeks were always impressed by skillful rhetoric, and, as is known especially through the intimate, detailed record of the Greek historian at the council, Sylvester Syropoulos, vacillated between acceptance of union and rejection of it, not only on dogmatic, ethnic, and psychological grounds, but (this is a lesser point, to be sure) because of what many believed was the too often reprehensible morality and arrogance of the Latin clergy.²⁴ One is again reminded in this regard of Bernardino's Franciscan confrère Bonaventura, of two centuries earlier. For it was precisely the example of Bonaventura's purity of life, his sense of moral righteousness, integrity, and amiability that apparently made such a favorable impression on the Greeks at Lyons. On Bernardino, besides the evidence already cited, we might adduce the perhaps overly effusive opinion of the famous contemporary Florentine bookseller and humanist Vespasiano, who writes that "in no other man was there to be found such a wonderful concourse of talents."²⁵

If we can accept the evidence of the anonymous Franciscan account of Bernardino's life as well as Chalcondyles' words in praise of him, it would seem that Bernardino's career had made a vivid impression in certain circles of the East as well as the West. Indeed, it is not at all unlikely that when Pope Eugenius summoned Bernardino to Florence, he had partly in mind the impression his personality and reputation for purity of life might make on the Greek clergy, in particular on the intransigently antiunionist Greek monks.

For it is to them that the rather austere reform program of the Observantist Franciscan friars would have been most appealing. The broader implication here is not only that the clergy and the monks of each side could mix and learn more about each other but, more important, that there was also at Florence, besides the high-level intellectual and theological exchanges, a certain interchange between the two sides on a more informal, private level. Except for the private, rather formal, banquets presided over by Cosimo de' Medici, at which Pletho, Bessarion, and other Byzantines expounded on the texts of the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophies, the possibility of contact on other levels than this has been largely ignored by historians of the council.

We know from many testimonies that, with respect to the famous question of poverty, Bernardino held to a middle course between the views of the very strict Spiritual Franciscans (by now heretical) and those of the far more relaxed Conventuals. Throughout his entire life Bernardino never, in fact, ceased to preach his views (called the "Observance"—that is, a *stricter observance* of St. Francis's rule): to live a simpler, more severe life with respect to food, clothing, and housing, and to have absolutely no individual possessions. To adhere best to these prescriptions, a friar, it would appear, should lead an ascetic life. It does not seem too much to believe, then, that through the living example of Bernardino's sincere kind of piety and exemplary conduct, at least some of the Greeks, might have gained a more favorable impression of the Roman church, especially regarding the personal morality and social ethics of the Latin monastic clergy, than was all too often projected in the East by their brethren of the secular clergy, the proud prelates of the Roman Curia.²⁷ The example set by Bernardino's piety and forthrightness is, it would seem, precisely referred to in the words of the anonymous Franciscan, as noted above: "Now through the example of his life, now by private talks and public sermons, [he helped] to bring the Greeks to union."²⁸

Among those in whom Bernardino's example might, in particular, have struck a responsive chord were the Hesychast Greek monks—to whose long tradition of contemplation and asceticism a number of Greek monks and clerics at Florence, including Mark of Ephesus, still adhered.²⁹ (Whether they were technically "Hesychasts" or "Palamites" need not concern us here.)³⁰ Nevertheless, at Florence, if we examine the sources, we see that the Greek Hesychasts did not



Emperor John VIII Palaeologus and Patriarch Joseph at the Council of Florence, detail from the "Miracle of San Bernardino," attributed to an anonymous painter from Urbino. Courtesy of the Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria. (See pp. 202-03.)

so much as open their mouths on the beliefs of Hesychasm. It was, in fact, the emperor himself who forbade his clergy even to bring up the subject.³¹ The Hesychast theology of the divine energies as contrasted with that of the divine essence, and their explanation of the light of Mt. Tabor as seen by human eyes, were views apparently considered too hazardous to defend effectively before the Latins. Indeed, it is highly probable that the emperor (and his unionist-minded prelates) wished to avoid providing any opportunity of being accused of propounding dogma which, according to the Latin view, was not part of that formulated by the early church fathers. And this especially since the question of the "addition," or innovation, of doctrine (witness the filioque problem) was precisely the chief accusation always leveled by the Greeks against the Latins. Moreover, it goes without saying that in Florence the emperor wanted to present a united Greek front against the Latins.

Nevertheless, despite the *official* silence of the Greek delegation in Florence on Hesychastic theology, one may venture the opinion that exchanges of a friendly nature on Hesychastic ascetical practices and beliefs did take place *in private* between Bernardino and the Greek representatives. This is particularly likely since, as certain modern scholars believe, the form of the Jesus prayer as recited by Bernardino was similar to (if not indirectly derived from) the famous centuries-old Jesus prayer of the Greek Hesychasts: "Lord Jesus Christ have mercy upon me." (Some authorities hold that both Eastern and Western forms of the prayer derived from early Greek tradition, especially stemming from the "Kyrie eleeson" of the Greek liturgy of John Chrysostom, which, in time, passed in the West to such persons as St. Bernard of Clairvaux, St. Bonaventura, and from him later to his devotee San Bernardino.)³²

Bernardino's constant emphasis on the very name of Jesus, as evidenced in his famous anagram of Greek letters (IHC, the acronym for Jesus), which, inscribed on a placard, he carried everywhere, and which he insisted that Italian towns adopt in place of their factional party slogans, would have pleased the Greek Hesychasts in particular. For they, too, emphasized the Holy Name in their Jesus prayer, the repetition of which, together with certain exercises, was to them a means of attaining a state of contemplation and inner peace.³³

One could speculate on what might have happened had Bernardino, the fervent Western preacher and moralist, come into collision, directly or through interpreters, with the foremost Greek preacher



Portrait of San Bernardino of Siena by Pietro di Giovanni di Ambrogio. Courtesy of the Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena. (Note the Greek acronym for the name of Jesus, IHS, see pp. 202-03.)



Portrait of Mark of Ephesus from an illuminated manuscript, no. 19, fol. 350v. Courtesy of the Benaki Museum, Athens. (See pp. 202-03.)

and spokesman, the equally fiery Mark of Ephesus. Mark, as noted in the Prologue, was the intransigent champion of the independence of the Greek church vis-à-vis Rome, and Bernardino was no less unyielding on matters of faith.³⁴ That there was nevertheless a friendly rapport between Mark and at least one Latin unionist, is indicated by a Latin source for the council, which affirms that Ambrogio Traversari, the affable Camaldolese monk who knew Greek very well and was, in fact, the chief Latin interpreter there, was permitted by Mark Eugenikos to go through his library in search of manuscripts.³⁵

Bernardino's contacts with the Greeks, as we have tried to delineate here, would seem significant for informal, unofficial relationships between members of the two ecclesiastical delegations. Indeed, a similarity of interests between Bernardino and the Greek clerics, especially many of the monks—emphasis on Jesus prayer, on personal piety and morality, and on eloquence in preaching, not to speak of possible humanistic proclivities—may well have made a considerable impression on the Greeks and thus, at least indirectly, contributed to the successful outcome of the council, however ephemeral.

Marcus Musurus: New Information on the Death of a Byzantine Humanist in Italy

The question of the circumstances surrounding the death in 1517 of the Renaissance's greatest Hellenist, the Cretan scholar Marcus Musurus, particularly the curious story of his reputed death from "envy" at not being named a cardinal by the pope, has not yet been satisfactorily resolved.¹ We know that about a decade before his death he had enjoyed a remarkable tenure of teaching Greek at the University of Padua and then in Venice, during which time at least two dozen of Europe's leading humanists (including Erasmus) had studied Greek language and literature with him. Subsequently, apparently in response to a summons from Pope Leo X, he had come to Rome to aid in the direction of a new Greek college founded by Leo.² Very probably, in moving from Venice to the papal capital, now increasingly characterized by a lavish patronage of artists and scholars, he saw an opportunity for the material advancement of his career. In any case, he must have become increasingly aware of the political decline of Venice and its replacement by Rome as the leading center of humanist scholarship in Europe.

In two documents found in the Venetian archives, certain interesting references are made to Musurus' death.³ It is the purpose of this chapter to see if, through an examination of these sources, more light can be shed on the circumstances surrounding his demise and particularly his state of mind at that time.

The problem arises because of a report of the famous Italian historian, Paolo Giovio, to the effect that Musurus' death was actually due to envy and disappointment at not being named to the cardinalate. As Giovio puts it (certainly with at least a little exaggeration since one does not die exclusively of envy!), Musurus, "driven by insane ambition which led him to an archbishopric [that of Monemvasia in Greece], aspired overhastily to the cardinalate." Giovio adds that Musurus often complained that none of the Greeks, to their great

shame, had achieved this high office of cardinal.⁴ This last statement is, of course, manifestly wrong, since Giovio—or Musurus—had apparently forgotten that, some seventy years before, Bessarion and Isidore of Kiev had both been made cardinals by Pope Eugenius IV after the Council of Florence, and that one century before Musurus' time, a fellow Cretan, Petros Philarges, had actually achieved the supreme rank of pope under the name of Alexander V (1409–10). Indeed, at the Council of Constance in 1414, the Byzantine humanist-diplomat Manuel Chrysoloras, too, had been one of the prime candidates for the office of pope.⁵ Nevertheless, it is true that in Musurus' own day no Greek had risen to the office of cardinal (though Janus Lascaris, Musurus' own teacher in Greek earlier at Florence, is reported to have been offered a cardinal's hat but rejected it).⁶

Giovio's charge of envy on the part of Musurus, it should be noted, is contradicted by another contemporary, the only other writer of the period to allude to the story, Lilio Gyraldi. Gyraldi affirms that it was, in fact, those who concocted the report who were envious—those who saw this as the sole means of defaming "this most learned and modest person." Gyraldi goes on to say that Musurus, while alive, was "well spoken of by all."⁷

The first of our documents is actually a report or dispatch of the *orator* (ambassador) of Venice to the papacy, Marco Minio, addressed to the doge of Venice on 26 October 1517,⁸ that is, some nine days after the presumed death of Musurus, which, according to the contemporary Venetian historian-diarist Marino Sanuto, occurred on 17 October 1517.⁹ However, the new document in question differs in chronology from Sanuto because, also on 26 October 1517, Minio writes that "in his [Musurus'] letter he signified to you that he greatly desired to return to lecture [in Venice], nor did the things here [in Rome] much satisfy him, but it pleased our Lord God to call him to Himself, and on Sunday at the hour of ten he died."¹⁰ Since 26 October 1517 fell on a Monday, the previous Sunday was not, then, the 17th but the 25th of October.¹¹

A more significant point is the question of the exact meaning, and especially the implications, of Minio's phrase "nor did things much satisfy him here [in Rome] [ne delle cose de qui molto si sodisfaceva]." According to Marino Sanuto's *Diarii*, "Musurus wanted to come to Venice to lecture but he had need first of sending some short letters in regard to benefices and he would be in Venice at the start of the Studio [the university year]." Our newly found document

corroborates Sanuto's statement regarding Musurus' desire to return to Venice to teach. What is more to the point, however, is Sanuto's statement that Musurus would not go to Venice until he had made arrangements for his benefices¹² (probably meaning, more specifically, the stipends derived from them). We know that Musurus had earlier been appointed archbishop of Monemvasia in Greece and also bishop of Hierapetra in Crete, though he never actually appeared in either place to perform his duties.¹³ Probably Marcus received a stipend for his teaching at the Greek college in Rome in addition to money from his sees in (Venetian-held) Monemvasia and Crete.

It is possible to construe Sanuto's statement as meaning that Musurus (who, as we know, was already in holy orders) also held various benefices in Rome not involving the care of souls, in which case, of course, before moving, he would have had to find a vicar to take his place in the papal capital so that he could continue in Venice to collect the income from his benefices. As is well known of the medieval period, if one held a benefice (as in the case of Petrarch much earlier) that did not involve the care of souls, one could appoint a vicar or clerk to perform the necessary duties of the office, which generally amounted only to the saying of a requisite number of Masses. It is probable that Musurus' income from Monemvasia was not great, and of course upon leaving for Venice he would have had to give up his stipend for teaching at the college in Rome (though at the same time this would be replaced by a Venetian salary). However valid all these speculations may be, we should take note here of a second (unpublished) document in trying to clear up the reason for his discontent in Rome and to determine whether, as Giovio puts it, it was connected with his "insatiable" ambition and envy at not being named to the cardinalate.

According to this new document, written also by Marco Minio to the doge of Venice but dated earlier than the first, that is, on 1 October 1517, "the making of cardinals was considered and the great *partito* [affair] was proposed (*vien posto*) to his holiness the pope, besides the necessity of money, [a condition] in which he [then] found himself—I believe, because of holding this new election, he thought of creating ten [posts costing] forty to sixty thousand ducats for each [candidate] that wishes to spend, and among the others was named a son of Dom Francesco da Ramada. . . . But certainly it is a thing of little dignity for this order [cardinalate], for aside from

the great number, because of the obligation imposed on them [to offer this great sum], they lose every sense of honor. But the device is fine for the pope."¹⁴ The above passage is difficult to read in the original document, some words or phrases being unclear, but the general meaning of the passage as a whole certainly seems to emerge.

Here we have material for new speculation on Musurus' attitude. He might have been angered by this flagrant flouting of decorum and the demand for what constituted a bribe of forty to sixty thousand ducats. Instead, then, of "sickening and dying of envy," as Giovio would have it, Musurus may have been incensed at the necessity of paying a bribe for the cardinalate. Or it is possible that, as a normally ambitious person, he may have been somewhat upset that he himself lacked the money to pay it.¹⁵ However, in this case, if we take October 1 as the date for the proposal of the payment for the cardinalate, there remains only an interval of twenty-five days in which the psychological condition Giovio supposes responsible for Musurus' death could have developed.

The modern German historian of the seventeenth century, O. Freher, erroneously says that Musurus did in fact become a cardinal.¹⁶ We know, in any case, from our first document of Marco Minio that Musurus did move in high curial circles. He was vice-secretary as well as a favorite of Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, the future Clement VII and cousin of Pope Leo, and thus presumably was on good terms with the group immediately surrounding the pope. Also, we learn from our second document, again a report of Minio to the doge, that Musurus' friend and former mentor Janus Lascaris (here called "Zuan Lascari") was named by him, in his will, as one of his executors, along with his old patron, Prince Alberto Pio of Carpi.¹⁷

It is plausible, then, that Marcus would have had some reason to aspire to being named to the cardinalate. Nevertheless, without other supporting evidence our document cannot effectively support the theory of Giovio that Musurus was "so chagrined and jealous at not being named cardinal that his body rapidly wasted away and he died." Yet at the same time it is not impossible, as noted earlier, that the demand for a bribe did upset him at least to some degree, when he saw others with money far less worthy than he being appointed (for example, the son of Dom Francesco da Ramada).¹⁸ Chagrin, therefore, may have been a contributing factor leading to his death, though it was almost certainly not the principal cause, in view of

Sanuto's positive statement (which there is no reason to challenge) in his *Diarii*, that "Musurus had been sick for two months and had become consumptive [lo episcopo Mussuro . . . e stato amalato do mexi, era venuto eticho]." ¹⁹

In a letter of the Bolognese professor-humanist Paolo Bombasio, he wrote, on 6 December 1517, to his friend (and Musurus') Erasmus, that the reason Musurus did not teach long at Pope Leo's Greek college in Rome was that Musurus "died in the autumn of 1517 of dropsy," and therefore not, as Giovio affirmed, of shame at not being named a cardinal. Though Bombasio's statement disagrees slightly regarding the precise disease that carried off Musurus, it nevertheless offers additional new testimony to render worthless Giovio's extraordinary aspersion cast on Musurus' character. ^{19a}

There are a number of attestations to the high quality of Marcus' character and moral conduct throughout his career, for example, on the part of Sanuto, Gyraldi, Alberto Pio, prince of Carpi, and also in the second letter of Minio dated (as noted) 1 October 1517, which describes "Marcus Musurus Cretensis" as "virtutibus ac prestanti doctrina verumque scientia ornatus." ²⁰ Thus, in view of the information provided in the documents presented here, though we still cannot make a categorical judgment, it would seem very likely that Giovio's charge against Musurus of insane jealousy that drove him, or at least contributed, to his death, is without any real substance. It may, indeed, be merely another of the defamatory stories so typical of the Italian Renaissance, which in this case may have been given more than usual credence because of Musurus' foreign Greek background.

Our new documents, then, besides casting grave doubts on the credibility of Giovio's story regarding Musurus' mental attitude before his demise, also provide us with a few new facts: first, that he died between October 24 and 25 and not on October 17, as Sanuto says. ²¹ (Let us not forget that Sanuto was then living in distant Venice, while Minio was residing in Rome where Musurus died.) Another new point is that a logical explanation for Musurus' failure to achieve the cardinalate is the fact that Pope Leo required from each potential candidate payment of forty to sixty thousand ducats, a large sum which Musurus could undoubtedly ill afford. Nevertheless, this demand may seem less reprehensible if we recall that Leo was engaged in war at this time and that the expense of maintaining a rich, humanist court was considerable, the Medici family fortune

itself not being what it used to be.²² Interesting also is the information that the pope was not at Musurus' funeral but hunting somewhere on the outskirts of Rome,²³ a fact which may or may not indicate that Musurus, at that particular moment, was not in his good graces. In addition, Minio explicitly states what Sanuto had already suggested—that Musurus was not satisfied with living in Rome.

Finally, we learn that at Musurus' funeral a great number of distinguished personages were present: Musurus' friend Giulio de' Medici, cousin of Pope Leo and himself later Pope Clement VII,²⁴ bishops, the envoy of the Holy Roman emperor, that of Portugal,²⁵ and Marco Minio himself as envoy of the government of Venice.²⁶ The document does not state categorically whether Janus Lascaris or the prince of Carpi were present at Musurus' obsequies, but since they are explicitly named as executors of Musurus' will, we may safely assume that such was the case.²⁷

To summarize, then, although we may not have uncovered anything of great significance to contradict what modern scholars have written about Musurus' career in general, we have been able to add several interesting details that serve to round out our knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the death of this most erudite of all the Hellenists in the Western Renaissance. Musurus was a man of high character and repute, considerably superior to any other Greek émigré, except possibly Bessarion or Janus Lascaris. Hence, in view of all the above reasons and implications, it would seem that the defamatory story of Paolo Giovio about this learned scholar of the Renaissance may finally be laid to rest once and for all.

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The Career of the Byzantine Humanist Demetrius Chalcondyles at Padua, Florence, and Milan

The humanist movement in the Italian Renaissance began as a Latin revival, but it was probably the restoration of Greek letters which did more than anything else to expand the intellectual horizon of Renaissance humanism.¹ In the history of this Greek revival the most significant role was played by the Greek scholar-exiles from the Byzantine East. Knowledge of the activities of these Greek scholars and their contribution to the Renaissance has increased in recent years. But the careers of many, including even some of the more important, refugees are still not sufficiently known. More precisely, their contribution has not yet adequately been integrated into the mainstream of Italian humanistic development.

One such career is that of Demetrius Chalcondyles, a Byzantine humanist (born in Athens before Constantinople's fall) about whom very little has been written in English. His career is of importance not only because of his many editions of ancient Greek works but equally because of his teaching in Florence, Padua, and Milan, three of the chief centers of humanistic development. This chapter will examine his tenure of teaching in Florence and Milan, and more especially at Padua—the latter a period about which very little has been known. Information about this Paduan phase of his career will be gleaned from the essentially unpublished text of a document containing the famous address he delivered in 1463 on the occasion of the inauguration of Greek studies at the great University of Padua.

The career of Chalcondyles may conveniently be divided into three broad phases, each concerned with his instruction of Greek: the Paduan phase (he was at Padua from 1463 to 1472), then the Florentine (1475 to 1491) and, finally, the Milanese (he instructed at Milan until his death in 1511).² About his earliest years, that is, those he spent in Greece before his arrival in Italy, almost nothing is

known. He was born in August, it seems, of 1423 in Athens rather than Constantinople, as some authorities have believed. His family, one of the most powerful and noble of Athens, could trace its lineage as far back as the twelfth century. Demetrius' family had lived in Athens under the domination of the various Western conquerors following the Fourth Crusade in 1204: the French, the Catalans, and finally the Florentine family of the Acciaiuoli. It was probably because of differences with the latter that the entire Chalcondyles family, sometime in the late fourteenth century, moved to the Peloponnesus. There they settled in or near the Byzantine city of Mistra, where in this period the famous Byzantine Platonist Gemistos Pletho was teaching. What made the family move back to Athens, it may be conjectured, was the gradual stabilization of conditions in Greece after the Turkish conquest of Athens in 1456. Aside from these few references to his family life, we have no information on Chalcondyles up to the time of his arrival in Italy in 1449, when he was little more than twenty-five years of age.³ As we learn from the report of an Italian pupil of his, Giovanni Campani, he came directly to Rome from Athens. This would indicate that he did not travel via Venice, the usual funnel for Greek émigrés coming to Italy. Rather than making a long sea voyage, he crossed, it seems, by sea from Ragusa to Ancona, after which he journeyed on land to Rome.

We may assume that, like other contemporary Greek intellectuals, Demetrius' aim was to find support in Rome in the circle of the most eminent Byzantine exile of the age, the powerful Roman cardinal and scholar John Bessarion. As patron of the Greeks, Bessarion had surrounded himself in Rome with a remarkable circle of Greek (and some Latin) humanists, whose primary activity was copying Greek manuscripts and translating them into Latin.⁴ Despite Demetrius' purpose, however, his principal patron and guide throughout most of his life was not to be Bessarion but, rather, another Byzantine humanist of a somewhat earlier generation. This was Theodore Gaza of Thessalonika, whose pupil Demetrius became, and to whom Demetrius bound himself in an intimate and enduring friendship.⁵

In 1452, for reasons not entirely clear but which doubtless had to do with his inability to support himself properly in Rome, Demetrius went to Perugia. Exactly how long he stayed there is not certain. At any rate, he was in Rome again in 1455, living for a time in the orbit of Bessarion and his court. It was some years later, in about 1462, that Demetrius became involved in the famous quarrel among the

Greeks over the relative merits of the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. His role, a secondary one, consisted of replying to a tract written by another Greek then residing in Crete, Michael Apostolis, who, in order to curry favor with his patron Bessarion, had launched a violent verbal attack on the Aristotelian Theodore Gaza.

But Apostolis' plan backfired. For Bessarion, though himself a Platonist, was angered. And when Chalcondyles—we may recall that he was Gaza's friend and pupil—took it upon himself to reply to Apostolis (his response has unfortunately not survived), Bessarion was gratified. The incident, relatively unimportant in itself, is of some significance, not only because it marked the beginning of the celebrated Renaissance conflict over the philosophies of Aristotle and Plato, but also because of the attention it inevitably directed to the *original* texts of the two philosophers, which in turn led to a more intensive study and clarification of their respective views. Thus, in the long run, it helped enormously to widen the philosophic horizon of the entire Renaissance. As for Chalcondyles, it reveals something of his loyalty and friendship, that, despite his personal inclination toward Plato, he could take up the cudgels on behalf of an Aristotelian.⁶

Except for a few rather vague hypotheses, little else may be adduced regarding this phase of Demetrius' career. The important question certainly is how he managed to secure appointment to the first chair of Greek to be created at the celebrated University of Padua. As we shall note shortly, our new document will enable us to answer not only this question but others—such as what courses he taught, the quality of his Latinity at this time (for the document is written in Latin), and finally, how he sought to justify, in his own eyes as well as those of his audience, the creation of a chair of Greek studies at Padua.

Let us pause briefly to indicate some of the more illustrious of the many pupils Chalcondyles taught during his tenure at Padua. His most learned student was undoubtedly the young Byzantine Janus Lascaris, to whom Chalcondyles, whose attitude was so different from that of a good number of the jealous Greek humanists of the time, never ceased to be devoted. Also, Giovanni Lorenzo, the Venetian (who later, in 1466, as Demetrius tells us in an epigram, helped Demetrius correct—that is, edit for the press—the famous Byzantine *Planudean Anthology*). Other pupils of Demetrius at Padua were the Italian humanists Varino Favorino Camerti, Niccolò

Leonico Tomeo, Agostino Baldo, Andrea Brenta, and, finally, the copyist of Chalcondyles' inaugural discourse at Padua, the German student and later well-known physician from Nürnberg, Hartmann Schedel.⁷

Why did Chalcondyles, apparently well liked and prosperous at Padua, leave his post to go to Florence in 1472? We should not forget that by the mid-fifteenth century Florence had become unquestionably the world's leading humanist center, and that it must therefore have been the ambition of many learned Greek émigré-scholars, to go to that city and to succeed to the chair held over half a century before by their celebrated Byzantine countryman, the great Manuel Chrysoloras. As will be recalled, it was with Chrysoloras' teaching, begun at the Florentine *studium* in 1397, that Greek studies may be said effectively to have been initiated in the Renaissance.

There are two other relevant facts to explain Chalcondyles' departure for Florence. First, that the previous holder of the chair, the Greek John Argyropoulos, for reasons still obscure, had in July of 1471 left the chair vacant. And second, that Demetrius Chalcondyles (so several historians believe, perhaps exaggeratedly) may have become unhappy at Padua because his appointment had to be renewed each year—a circumstance which may have made him feel insecure at what he felt was the need continually to demonstrate his worthiness.⁸ Of course, one cannot rule out the possibility of discord over some other matter—say, over his stipend. Another plausible reason for Demetrius' departure for Florence may have been simply the fact that, since the Council of Florence in 1438–39 and especially after the tenure of John Argyropoulos, the chair of Greek at Florence had become the most coveted in all of Italy.

Meantime, that is, during the four-year period the Florentine post was vacant, an incident worthy of special notice occurred in the life of Demetrius. On a trip he made from Padua to Bologna in order to pay his respects to Bessarion, he was (as we learn from a letter written by Demetrius himself to a friend),⁹ treated by Bessarion with unwarranted contempt and haughtiness. Bessarion, it seems, hardly condescended to give him an audience and said almost nothing to him, indeed barely deigned to mention his name. As Chalcondyles himself rather jaundicedly puts it: "In the past I considered him [Bessarion] arrogant and scurvy-ridden, but not at all deprived of judgment. But now I adjudged him even worse. When others realize

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he is only 'an ass clothed in the skin of a lion,' all will disparage him."¹⁰ This statement may well strike us as rather astonishing in view of Bessarion's reputation for magnanimity to his fellow Greek exiles, in particular when we see later how effusively Demetrius himself was to praise Bessarion for, as he says, securing for him his post at Padua. In any event, the remark militates against almost all other testimony we have about Bessarion, presenting him in a new light and disclosing a side to his nature quite contrary to that usually attributed to him.

The main impediment to Demetrius' nomination to the Florentine post seems to have been the presence in Florence of still another Greek savant, Andronikos Callistos, who may well already have been teaching privately in the city on the Arno. In fact, it was only after Callistos' departure from Florence for Milan in March of 1475 that Demetrius appeared in Florence. His coming was evidently in part the result of intervention in his favor by the Italian Hellenist Francisco Filelfo, who addressed two letters to the young but influential Florentine humanists, Alemanno Rinuccini and Donato Acciaiuoli.¹¹ Whatever the extent of the influence exercised by these three humanists in Demetrius' favor, it is clear that, in September of 1475, Chalcondyles was officially appointed to the famous *cathedra* of Greek in Florence.

Thus, finally, as Cammelli rather floridly puts it,¹² Demetrius, in the joy of realizing his dream, could forget the disappointments of his first arrival in Italy, his long peregrinations from city to city in vain search of a post, the difficulties that had embittered his last years at Padua, and the new anxieties he had suffered to find a new position. And indeed, after twenty-six years in a foreign land, Demetrius could now, in fact, look forward to a serene and tranquil period of his life in Florence. For he was to spend an uninterrupted sojourn of sixteen years there, marred only by the death of his close friend Theodore Gaza, which occurred in the very year he assumed his new position. Though no Vespasiano da Bisticci (the famous Florentine biographer) has left us intimate glimpses of Chalcondyles' life in Florence (as he did for Chalcondyles' predecessor, Argyropoulos), we know enough about Demetrius' career there to derive a fairly clear picture of the deep impression his teaching and personality made on the Florentine intellectual community.

It was during the long tenure of his predecessor, the brilliant John Argyropoulos, that the atmosphere had been prepared for Demetrius'

talents in literature as well as philosophy to show to their best advantage. The famous Platonic Academy of Florence was created by Cosimo de' Medici in 1462—an event which, as Della Torre puts it, "transported the ancient learning of Athens to the banks of the Arno."¹³ Nevertheless, it is often overlooked that, previous to this academy and for a time, in fact, contemporary with it, there existed in Florence another academy, one devoted to the cult of Aristotle. This latter was in its later years under the leadership of Argyropoulos, as the Platonic Academy was to be under that of Marsilio Ficino. Though both academies thus seemed originally to be rivalrous in scope, largely as the result of Argyropoulos' influence a period of relative peace between them gradually came about. (Indeed, Argyropoulos himself in his *private* instruction in his home may be said to have initiated the teaching of Platonism in Florence.)

In the conflict generated by the Greeks at the Council of Florence over the relative primacy of Aristotle or Plato, the last word was spoken, in 1469, by Bessarion in his *In Calumniatorem Platonis*. One year before, in 1468, Cristoforo Landino had composed his *Disputationes Camaldolenses*, in which *both* academies were depicted as playing an important role. Evidence that conciliation rather than rivalry, or at least not hostility, had now become the order of the day, is attested to by the fact that Demetrius, a professed Platonist, seemed to owe his appointment to the Florentine *studium* mainly to two Aristotelians, the young Rinuccini and Acciaiuoli.

Despite the increasing pacification of the two groups, it cannot be denied that the coming of Demetrius signified a triumph for the Platonic faction in Florence. Indeed, the most luminous period of the Platonic Academy, from 1470 to 1492, when it was under the aegis of Lorenzo the Magnificent, may be said to have coincided almost exactly with the period of Demetrius' tenure in the Greek chair at Florence. (Chalcondyles arrived in 1475 and left Florence at the end of 1491.) Interestingly enough, Lorenzo the Magnificent, an early disciple of Argyropoulos and one who had himself initially begun to specialize in the teaching of Aristotle, now became the great partisan of the Platonic Academy under Ficino.¹⁴

The precise courses that Chalcondyles taught at Florence are not reported to us, though several surviving documents (two, for example, dating from 1484 and 1489) state that Chalcondyles was engaged in the teaching of moral philosophy and the Greek authors, presumably literary.¹⁵ These and other bits of information permit us

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to assume that Chalcondyles taught *both* Greek literature and Greek philosophy.

In this flourishing period of his career and of the humanistic primacy of Florence, Chalcondyles had as colleagues in the *studium* a group of humanists of unique brilliance and learning, not only Angelo Poliziano, the Florentine Hellenist and most influential figure at Lorenzo's court, but the Platonist Cristoforo Landino, and others. The list of Demetrius' students, some of whom subsequently became noted humanists in their own right, is impressive. Among the Florentines were Piero de' Medici (son of Lorenzo) and Pietro Dalian. Among the many non-Italian students who came to hear him were, notably, the Englishmen William Grocyn and Thomas Linacre, both of whom later returned to their homeland much the richer for their study with Chalcondyles. Also John Reuchlin, later to become the most celebrated of German humanists who, after some years, even followed Chalcondyles to Milan in order to continue studying with him there.¹⁶ The great success and popularity achieved by Chalcondyles in Florence is attested to by the unanimous praise accorded him from all quarters and by the breadth of his reputation, which soon spread to all the learned circles of western Europe.

The only rivalry or rancor (or even suggestion of it) that seems, then, to have clouded his life—and this is disputed by certain historians—was in connection with the Florentine humanist Angelo Poliziano. Some scholars affirm that Poliziano, after learning all he could from the Greek émigrés, began to denigrate them and their contribution to humanism, and to consider his mastery of Greek language and literature superior to theirs. One critic, indeed, believes that Chalcondyles, a man without a homeland, objected to the following words of Poliziano, delivered publicly from his chair in the *studium* to the humanists of Florence: "In your city, O Florentines, Greek learning again lives. Your youth now speaks the Greek language with such Attic purity that it would seem that Athens, which is now in the hands of the barbarians, has itself been transplanted to your Florence and become one with it."¹⁷

It may be noted that the hypothesis of rivalry and ill-feeling between Poliziano and Chalcondyles is strongly supported by the contemporary writer Paolo Giovio. But, as scholars have noted (see chap. 12), Giovio's "evil tongue" was always prone to find evidence of malice in the characters of those he discussed. Giovio, for example,

by implication even attacks the honor of Demetrius' wife—Demetrius had married extremely late in Florence—who, remarkably, bore ten children when Demetrius was between the ages of seventy-one and seventy-seven.¹⁸

Chalcondyles' influence on Florentine culture was not limited to the teaching of Greek but also extended to publication. Most important was his two-volume edition, printed in 1488, of the Greek poet Homer, the first great work to be printed in Greek.¹⁹ This was published at the expense of two young Florentine pupils of Chalcondyles, Bernardo Nerli and Piero de' Medici, who, as Chalcondyles himself gracefully put it, "could easily have spent their money on some other trifle [*epinoia tini*]."²⁰ In the Greek preface to this edition of Homer, Chalcondyles relates how difficult it was to reconstruct the text of "this supreme guide to all men in the life of wisdom," since the manuscripts he had used were so mutilated. The first volume of Homer contains, besides the *Iliad*, the life of Homer by Herodotus and Plutarch and the oration on Homer by Dio Chrysostom. Volume 2 contains the *Odyssey*, the *Batrachomyomachia* (*The Battle of the Mice and Men*), and the *Hymns*, the latter supposedly written by Homer.²¹ Chalcondyles affirms that he utilized in his edition the famous scholia of the twelfth-century Byzantine scholar, Eustathius of Thessalonica. But several modern critics (Camelli and Ferrai among them) remark that actually this edition differed little from the "vulgate" Byzantine version of the period.²² It should be noted that more truly critical editions of Homer were not to be produced until later in the sixteenth century, especially in 1577 by Henry Stephanus, whose edition was based on all the codices and scholia then known.

Let us now consider the third and last phase of Chalcondyles' career—his tenure in Milan after the felicitous years in Florence. Once again a certain mystery exists regarding his departure from his chair in Florence. This circumstance reminds us that Chalcondyles seems only too typical of most of the Greek refugee-exiles who, far from their homeland and possessed of a nostalgia for their country, often suffered from a kind of wanderlust. In the case of Demetrius, there is evidence of several invitations made to him to teach elsewhere than in Florence (in Ragusa and possibly Rome). But he did not accept, though he himself may well have solicited the offers. Finally, however, again at the recommendation of Filelfo, he did accept the offer of the wealthy and powerful duke Ludovico il Moro to assume the position of professor of Greek at his court in Milan.²³

Before the arrival of Demetrius, Greek letters had not been systematically cultivated in Milan despite the teaching there intermittently (privately or publicly) of several Greek scholars: the great Manuel Chrysoloras (called by Giangaleazzo in 1400; Manuel's one student in Milan had been Umberto Decembrio); briefly, Demetrius Castrenos, Andronicus Callistos, and the extremely erudite Byzantine, Constantine Lascaris.²⁴ With respect to Constantine, in 1462 forty-seven leading Milanese citizens (including Pier Candido Decembrio, son of the Milanese humanist, Umberto) appealed to their government to have the chair of Greek letters bestowed upon "Constantine the Constantinopolitan [Lascaris]," whereupon Lascaris assumed the post, publicly teaching in Milan for two years. But in 1474 Lascaris suddenly abandoned Milan and moved to Messina to occupy its *cathedra* of Greek.²⁵

It was probably only natural that at this juncture the Milanese ruler, the learned Mycenae Ludovico il Moro, bethought himself of Demetrius Chalcondyles, whose reputation had by now spread throughout all of Italy. And so with the arrival in Milan of Demetrius in 1477, one may say that the Greek chair had finally been permanently filled. As Camelli affirms with no more than slight exaggeration, the center of Greek studies in Renaissance Italy now moved from Florence to Milan.²⁶ An indication of the enthusiasm engendered by Chalcondyles' teaching is provided by a secretary of il Moro who, upon hearing Demetrius' inaugural lecture, wrote that Demetrius showed "vast erudition and knowledge not only of Greek literature but also of Latin"—evidence of how much Demetrius' Latin must have improved since his Paduan days.²⁷

The period of Demetrius' Milanese sojourn deserves further scholarly investigation. But it may be said briefly that the personality and erudition of Demetrius complemented well the brilliant coterie of intellectuals and artists assembled by il Moro, the ruler of Milan. There, celebrated artists such as Leonardo da Vinci and Bramante mingled with almost equally famous humanists. The list of Demetrius' pupils in Milan, if not quite so brilliant as that in Florence, is almost as large. It includes, among others, Baldassare Castiglione (later the celebrated author of *The Courtier*), Lilio Gyraldi, Benedetto Giovio, brother of Paolo Giovio, the celebrated German, John Reuchlin (mentioned above), and even, it seems, the great printer of Venice, Aldus Manutius. Besides teaching, Demetrius found time to maintain an extensive correspondence with such scholars as the most able

Hellenist of the French humanists, Guillaume Budé (who later studied Greek in Paris under Demetrius' best pupil, Janus Lascaris). It was Budé who now termed Chalcondyles "the master of our times."²⁸ Even more significantly, Chalcondyles also devoted his considerable energies to the editing and translating of Greek authors for the press. Notably he translated Galen's *On Anatomy* (first printed in Bologna in 1529). His edition of the orator Isocrates was printed in Milan in 1493, and the voluminous edition of the Byzantine *Suda Lexicon*, appeared in 1499. As Chalcondyles himself accurately pointed out in his preface, the *Suda Lexicon* was "a mine of information for the scholar."²⁹

But as happened with respect to more than one humanist center in Italy, political and military events following upon the French invasion of Italy in 1494 now overwhelmed Milan. In 1499, in fact, the French king Louis XII captured il Moro himself and took him as prisoner to France. The glory of Milanese humanist culture seemed to have ended. Chalcondyles' fortunes in particular are unknown during these years. Nevertheless, a statement of Marino Sanuto that in 1500 Demetrius competed with others for a chair in Venice would seem to indicate his financial need. Moreover, we have evidence that in 1500 he was in Ferrara for a time.³⁰ His tribulations, however, seem to have come to a happy end in 1501 when the new French rulers of Milan recalled him and restored him to his old post. Henceforth, for ten more years, until his death in 1511 at the advanced age of eighty-eight, Chalcondyles was able to reap a second and renewed success in Milan. The happiness of his last years was disturbed, however, by the unexpected, tragic deaths of several of his sons (as noted, he had ten children in all) who, while still in their mid-twenties, had as budding Hellenists already exhibited some of the talent of their father.³¹

During Chalcondyles' nine-year tenure at Padua, his sixteen at Florence, and his almost twenty years at Milan, he achieved a record which in length of teaching and brilliance—except, of course, for the eventful short years of Chrysoloras in Florence, and possibly those of Musurus later in Padua—cannot be matched by any other Byzantine or Latin teacher of Greek in the Italian Renaissance. It would seem more than coincidental that his teaching in Lorenzo's Florence and il Moro's Milan coincided almost exactly with two of the most brilliant periods of humanistic development in the entire Renaissance.

After this delineation of Demetrius' career, let us return to the

document we alluded to earlier—Chalcondyles' inaugural speech (or speeches) delivered in 1463 on the establishment of the new chair of Greek studies at Padua University.³² The precise circumstances of Chalcondyles' appointment at Padua, particularly the person or persons to whom he owed his nomination, have not hitherto been clarified, though scholars have suspected as preparing the way, the Byzantine Theodore Gaza (his old teacher and patron), Francesco Filelfo, and Palla Strozzi.³³ Whatever their efforts behind the scenes, we may now learn from the unpublished text of Chalcondyles' oration precise details on who was most directly responsible for establishment of the chair. As Chalcondyles puts it: "Through the most illustrious and outstanding authority of the Venetians at the request of the most reverend my Lord Cardinal personal legate of the Holy See . . . and patron of Constantinople, and by the favor and help of the Magnificent Rector and of the excellent scholars [does this refer to Gaza, Filelfo, and Strozzi, or, more probably, to the faculty of Padua University?] I was accordingly appointed publicly to lecture on Greek letters."³⁴ The words *my Lord Cardinal*, of course, denote the great patron of the Greeks in Italy, the Byzantine-born John Cardinal Bessarion, to whose select intellectual circle in Rome Chalcondyles seems to have belonged earlier. A convert to the Roman church after the Council of Florence, Bessarion was now, it seems, papal governor of Bologna and envoy to Venice, to which city, with its large Greek community, he was later to leave his famous collection of Greek codices.³⁵

Let us move now to our manuscript itself—that is, to Chalcondyles' inaugural speech. After a brief introduction, four separate sections may be distinguished. The first two, very brief in scope, are evidently preambles to the two long discourses which constitute parts three and four of the manuscript. Section three undoubtedly constitutes *the* famous inaugural oration delivered by Chalcondyles, as was the custom in Renaissance Italy when one assumed a new university chair. The fourth section, again a lengthy oration, was most probably written (and evidently delivered by Chalcondyles) in the next year, 1464, that is, at the beginning of the succeeding year's course. The practice of giving a kind of second inaugural address at the commencement of the second year of a new course was not remarkable, indeed even rather common, in Renaissance Italy.³⁶

In view of the composition of Chalcondyles' audience, both speeches and their preambles, as would be expected, are composed

in Latin. In his brief introduction to the manuscript containing Chalcondyles' speeches, the scribe of the manuscript, Hartmann Schedel, later to become famous as a physician-humanist from Nürnberg, Germany,³⁷ introduces and emphasizes the significance of Chalcondyles as a scholar: "Demetrius the Athenian was that Greek who publicly expounded (*exposuit*) to us first at Padua the *Erotemata*, then Hesiod." Then Schedel, quoting from a preface of Marsilio Ficino which had been appended to Ficino's own famous translation of Plato's *Dialogues*,³⁸ first printed in 1484 (but of which the translation was finished earlier, in 1468 or 1470), interpolated the fascinating information, quoted from Ficino himself, that before publishing his celebrated translation of Plato, Ficino had "consulted with several critics for this work: Demetrius the Athenian, no less [expert] in philosophy and eloquence than others of the race of Attica."³⁹ In the published edition, Ficino adds the names of the Florentines Georgius Antonius and Joannes Battista, and also, though Schedel omits them here, the names of Angelo Poliziano, Cristoforo Landino, and Bartolomeo Scala.⁴⁰ But note that of all these famous names Chalcondyles is listed first. That Chalcondyles and Ficino had discussions in Florence, and in particular at the home of Bernardo Bembo, is attested elsewhere by Ficino himself, in his *Theologia Platonica*, book 6, chapter 1.⁴¹

From these opening remarks of Schedel, we are able to garner several interesting nuggets of completely new information. First that at Padua Chalcondyles lectured on the ancient Greek poet Hesiod and the *Erotemata* (grammar), probably that of Chrysoloras. It is thus clear that Chalcondyles taught not only the rudiments of Greek grammar but poetry—that is, literature, in particular the work of Hesiod, evidently his chief composition, the famous *Works and Days*. This is especially significant since this is probably the first time that works of Hesiod, as yet very little known in western Europe, had been taught at a Western university. (The *Works and Days* was, in fact, first published later in 1493 by Bonus Accursius in Milan, edited incidentally, by Chalcondyles himself.⁴² Let us not overlook, too, the reference to Ficino's consultation with Demetrius before publication of his translation of Plato's *Dialogues*, an achievement recognized as seminal in the development of Renaissance Platonism.⁴³ Moreover, one wonders, unless too much is read into the words, whether it is possible to see in Ficino's reference, quoted by Schedel, to Chalcondyles as expert in both philosophy and eloquence, an allusion to the

transformation taking place in Italian—particularly Florentine—humanism as the result of the Council of Florence and more recently of John Argyropoulos' philosophic teaching in Florence—that is, a shift from an emphasis on rhetoric to one on metaphysical philosophy.⁴⁴

Chalcondyles' inaugural speech, as revealed by its preamble, is addressed to the "Magnificent Rector and distinguished doctors and you other most erudite men"—presumably the assembled faculty of Padua, and, no doubt, the Venetian officials present as well. With typical exaggerated Renaissance (not to speak of Byzantine) modesty, Demetrius then enters the body of his discourse. "Assuredly, most cultivated and wise men, you have accustomed yourselves to exercise in all things the greatest courtesy (*humanitatem*) and gentleness. But this same kindness, may you be willing to show to me, a new man (*homini novo*), who is of mediocre erudition in Latin letters, and may you with a cheerful frame of mind hear my speech."⁴⁵

Of little interest is the second preamble inserted in the manuscript which, as noted, was probably delivered by Demetrius the following year at Padua as introductory to the second oration. This preamble is very similar to the first but is even more florid. There is one important passage, however, that may be quoted: "When . . . I was appointed publicly to teach Greek letters, it seemed good to say something not off the subject—how much utility, how much embellishment and perfection (*ornamenti perfectionisque*) they [Greek letters] bring and how the study of Greek literature has explained and does explain Latin letters."⁴⁶

Here Demetrius informs the assembled faculty of what he considers to be a special dividend they may expect from his instruction of Greek. Not only would a knowledge of Greek help the Paduan student more easily to explain Latin literature; it would, Demetrius indicates, aid the student in the formation of a better style. This remark was apparently calculated to appeal to the contemporary rhetorical interests of leading Italian humanists, as well, of course, as to reflect the more pragmatic propaganda of the Greek refugee scholars, to whose obvious professional interest it was to foster the desire of Western humanists to learn their language.

It should not surprise us that the Byzantine Chalcondyles begins his oration with a long justification for study of the Greek language. Such an apologia was common enough in humanist speeches of the period, or might conceivably even suggest that Greek studies were

still considered by some to be not really indispensable to a university curriculum. We might recall the early case of the humanist Giovanni Conversino da Ravenna, who was ignorant of Greek (he called anyone who addressed him in the language "barbarian")⁴⁷; and also that, probably in 1405, Cardinal Dominici in Florence violently attacked Coluccio Salutati for his interest in the classics (including ancient Greek literature)⁴⁸; and that in Venice itself, in around 1416, the secretary to the Venetian senate and chancellor of Crete, Lorenzo de' Monaci, a friend of both the great Florentine humanist Leonardo Bruni and the Venetian Francesco Barbaro, expressed profound hostility to everything Greek and declared that both the study of Greek and translations from that language were useless.⁴⁹ Of course, even at this relatively mature date (1463) in the development of the Renaissance, Demetrius' apologia at the beginning of his second discourse might also simply reflect the age-old Byzantine feeling of intellectual superiority to the Latins.

Chalcondyles continues in the same vein: "I believe that no one of you is ignorant that the Latins received every kind of liberal arts from the Greeks. And it is also well known that the originators of all these arts were Greek and that the very name of the arts was inspired by the Greek. So let me begin with the small things themselves and with the very rudiments of grammar, poetry, the oratorical art, history, logic, mathematics, natural philosophy, medicine, and then of divine science [theology] itself.⁵⁰ For who, even moderately learned, is unaware that they [the Greeks] were the inventors? Or that everything or some of the things which were received from others, they [the Greeks] themselves made more perfect and then transmitted to the Latins? . . . The Latins, following the Greeks even to the very elements of literature, are rightly thought, therefore, to have excelled other nations in every kind of learning, as in warfare. Since therefore they [Latins] had received literary studies (*studia litterarum*) and every craft (*omnes artes*) and they follow the inventors (*ductores*) themselves, no one could deny that the study of Greek letters offers much fruit to the Latins in every kind of learning. And about the things, first of all, which pertain to grammar, I shall say something. Since Latin grammar is joined to Greek and seems to depend upon it, how can anyone have a complete grasp (*cognitionem*) of it unless he knows Greek letters; nor can he know the derivation of very many words and their specific meanings, nor the declension of many nouns, nor the quantity

of syllables, nor want to speak correctly and elegantly (*recte ac eleganter*) if he is ignorant of Greek letters."

Chalcondyles proceeds to elaborate on the necessity of knowing Greek for a more perfect knowledge of Latin.⁵¹ He observes that "no one can say rightly, I believe, that some Latin authors wrote some works concerning these things and therefore it is not necessary to know Greek literature."⁵² For they [the Latin authors] speak thus about these things [Greek letters] so that the learners may have knowledge of them, so that they may not be completely ignorant of them [Indeed, how could anyone] desirous to quench his thirst seek the swamp (as I should say) rather than the fountain and, being hungry, prefer to have dessert instead of solid food?⁵³ In the same way, I think this should be said about those things that seem to pertain to poets, oratory, and every branch of speaking (*genus dicendi*), since no one considers that a poem or an oration may be written without nouns (*nominibus*), correct diction (*recta locutione*), figures [of speech], brilliant shadings (*coloribus*) and subject matter (*argumentis*).⁵⁴ And since both skills [he refers here to poetry and oratory] have been handed down abundantly and copiously by them and have been put to use in their Latin poems, orations, and histories most fully and perfectly, the old Latin authors (*auctores*), the poets, the orators, and also the historians, confirm my opinion: none of them [the Roman authors] was ignorant of Greek letters. Indeed, several (*complures*) of them venerated Greek literature so thoroughly, that one wonders whether they knew Greek or Latin literature better."⁵⁵ Here he quotes Cicero, that "hero" of the early Italian Quattrocento, who, Chalcondyles declares, always coupled Greek and Latin. He also cites Brutus and Favorinus and other Latin authors. Demetrius here affirms: "nor would those most learned men [the ancient Romans] have devoted so much effort to this literature unless they had believed that they could have secured a great benefit from them, and they realized that Greek literature was an aid and an embellishment (*ornamento*) [i.e. in style] to the Latin literature and to their own works." Chalcondyles then cites Horace's famous words, from his *Art of Poetry*: "Turn over the Grecian models both night and day."⁵⁶

It may be said that this reference, meager as it is, reveals something of Chalcondyles' somewhat limited knowledge of Latin poetry.⁵⁷ For though expert in Greek literature, the usual Byzantine

or post-Byzantine humanist in the West disdained or even consciously neglected Latin literature, especially poetry, as being inferior to Greek.⁵⁸ Of all the Greek refugees, very few besides Theodore Gaza, Janus Lascaris, Michael Marullus, and probably Bessarion, ever learned Latin thoroughly enough to write it elegantly.⁵⁹ Turning to philosophy—and Padua, let us recall, was famous for its Averroism—Chalcondyles remarks with no little justification that “the texts themselves of Aristotle . . . have been rather badly and improperly translated into the Latin language” and “in order that those who apply themselves chiefly in their own fountain of philosophy [is he here referring to the Averroists and Thomists of Padua?] might understand them [the works of Aristotle] fully and correctly, they should learn this literature.”

This important passage, it seems to me, may indicate how much Chalcondyles and other Byzantine scholars were distressed by the many inadequate Latin translations of Greek philosophic (and literary) works being circulated in the West. True, the Florentines, especially Bruni, had tried to get away (but not without criticism) from the crabbed, overly literal style of the medieval translators from the Greek, and under the tutelage of such Byzantines as Chrysoloras, Argyropoulos, and later this same Chalcondyles, were gradually producing Latin versions that adhered more to the spirit than the letter of the original text. One feels, nonetheless, that in his complaint Chalcondyles seems unaware of, or underestimates the significance of, the translations of Leonardo Bruni in particular, in helping to establish a new and broader horizon for the study of the original Aristotelian texts.⁶⁰

Chalcondyles moves on to a reference to medicine, astrology (which here probably means the “science of the stars,” namely, astronomy),⁶¹ and the other arts, “since, as I believe, most things are [included] in those disciplines (*scientiis*) which, unless one has Greek literature, cannot very easily be understood.” One particularly notes here Chalcondyles’ mention of medicine—which was *not* included in the curriculum of studies generally considered to be humanistic—that is, was not part of the *studia humanitatis*. At Padua University, however, medicine was very closely connected with the faculty of arts, so much so that, unlike at many other universities, both were listed under the same rubric, as the “faculty of arts and medicine.” Thus, in relating medical terms, especially their etymological roots, to the study of Greek grammar, Demetrius must have been catering

to the pride of the celebrated Paduan medical school, and showing how, from a humanistic point of view, Greek could be helpful in this respect too.

Then, more directly addressing the Paduan youth, or those who "have expended much strength and effort on virtues and the liberal arts," Chalcondyles exhorts them to the study of Greek so that they can reap a "delightful fruit, a fruit nourishing the mind." In seeking to induce them to such an endeavor, which, as he affirms, may at first glance seem to them onerous at this stage, he argues that, even if one starts the study of Greek rather late, "you will not find great difficulty . . . because Greek letters seem to have no small similarity and relationship to Latin letters. . . . And even if someone in some manner should believe that those letters are difficult to learn, yet you should not avoid any kind of toil or difficulty because of the hope of fruit and usefulness (*utilitas*) to be derived from them."⁶² Note here especially his reference to *utilitas*, a term often used by the humanists—the Schoolmen, incidentally, also used this term—in seeking to justify the profit to be gained from the study of ancient literature in order to make it useful to their contemporary world. To bolster this argument, Demetrius quotes, in good humanist fashion, from a classical Greek poet whose works, perhaps more than those of any other, emphasized the work ethic—Hesiod: "To virtue the gods joined much sweat." This is undoubtedly a paraphrase of a famous passage from Hesiod's chief composition, the *Works and Days*. Since this work had not yet been published and was little known in the West, the particular passage was probably not familiar to the scribe, who, in our manuscript, has tried—badly—to reproduce the original Greek letters in Latin characters.⁶³

To cap his argument to the Paduan students on the value of Greek, Chalcondyles promises, on his part, to spare no effort to instruct them effectively. And here he states—and this is a salient point—what *exactly* his teaching will consist of. He will teach, he affirms, a "beginning course in grammar, poetry [meaning literature], and oratory (*in his principiis grammaticae et in poetis ac oratoribus*)"⁶⁴ In other words, this instruction of his was to include, not only the basic grammar, but the more advanced material of the Greek orators and poets. Note that philosophy is not mentioned here, though Platonism, as already noted, had begun to be important in not distant Florence somewhat earlier, because of Pletho at the Council of Florence and, after 1456, with John Argyropoulos' instruction at

the Florentine *studium*; and Chalcondyles himself, still later of course, was to become famous as a professor of Platonism in Florence. Nevertheless, it would appear that at this time Padua University and its patron, the Venetian government, were probably more interested in the more practical benefits to be derived from the study of Greek, among other things, in connection with medicine and, perhaps, with the training of government secretaries and statesmen through Greek rhetorical studies.⁶⁵

Then, inevitably, as with every ethnically conscious Greek émigré, Chalcondyles loses no opportunity to impress upon the government and intellectuals of Venice the melancholy fate of his enslaved fellow countrymen. Lamenting their plight, he remarks especially on Bessarion's aim "for the recovery of wretched Greece (*Graecie misere*) which, most cruelly overrun and oppressed by them [the Turks], suppliantly implores the aid of all Christians and most of all the Latins, and from these Latins entreats this reward (*remuneracionem*). So that, just as she [Greece] had expended for them [the Latins] all of her most precious and outstanding possessions liberally and without any parsimony, and had restored into her state with her hand and force of arms Italy, long ago oppressed by the Goths, they [the Italians] should in the same way now be willing to raise up prostrate and afflicted Greece and liberate her by arms, from the hands of the barbarians." (He refers here, of course, to the analogy of Justinian's sixth-century reconquest of Italy from the Ostrogoths.) Note here also the rare reference, one of the few on the part of Byzantine refugee scholars, to Byzantium. The Greek exiles obviously preferred to remind Westerners of their intellectual debt to ancient Greece rather than to Byzantium which, in Western eyes, because of the lingering heritage of the Middle Ages, was still looked upon by many as being schismatic and even somewhat opprobrious.

Chalcondyles continues, mentioning the *utilitas* that will accrue to all Christendom if Greece is liberated. Then he singles out Venice, the state which had lost most through the Turkish capture of Constantinople: "Which [liberty] Greece will obtain, especially from the most illustrious lordship of the Venetians, through its [Venice's] authority and most holy and pious wish to be liberated from the infidels with God's favor and to be restored to her pristine state, [then] Greece will give undying thanks to Venice (*dominio*) for such lasting benefit." He closes his inaugural address with a curious and striking analogy between the fate of the damned in Dante's *Inferno*

and the prostrate condition of Greece, and finally with this protestation of modesty: "I wanted to say these things before you despite the meagerness of my learning (*doctrina*) and my talent (*ingenii*)."⁶⁶

Chalcondyles' analogy between the supine condition of the suffering Greeks and the damned in Dante's *Inferno*, besides revealing the unique phenomenon of a Byzantine scholar's all too rare knowledge of Italian literature, may also reflect a standard Byzantine belief that Constantinople had fallen to the infidel Turks as a result of Byzantine sins, the Turks having been sent by God as a scourge to chastise them until such time as the Greeks might be deemed worthy of resurrection as a nation. More relevant politically—and Chalcondyles no doubt was aware of the situation—is the fact that in the very same year this discourse was delivered (1463), Venice, after ten unsuccessful years of attempted appeasement of the Turks, had finally changed its policy. She was now engaged in the opening stages of a desperate struggle over the preservation of her territories in the former Byzantine East, now threatened by the Turks.⁶⁷

At this point the manuscript continues with the second discourse of the following year, 1464. The fact that Chalcondyles covers very much the same material as in the first speech, though at times more emphatically, may perhaps suggest that it is a later version by Chalcondyles of the earlier speech transcribed by the copyist. More likely, however, in view of the title, "Oratio secunda Greci Studii habita Padue," of the date inserted in the margin of the manuscript (1464), and, thirdly, of the statement of Schedel at the end, that the orations were copied "from the hand of the famous Greek [Chalcondyles]," it seems, rather, to be a speech delivered, in the not extraordinary custom of the age, at the beginning of the second year of Chalcondyles' course in Greek.⁶⁸

We know that many humanists, especially the earlier Florentines, were interested in what they considered the more practical—that is, the rhetorical, ethical, and historical—aspects of liberal studies (*studia humanitatis*) and less in the metaphysical or philosophic side. They wanted to study ancient letters, the *studia humanitatis*, not only for the benefit of the student's intellectual and moral development, but even more for the benefit (*utilitas*) of their city-state and society as a whole. With this practical scope in view—and Chalcondyles certainly must have had some knowledge of the ideals of the Florentines—it may be understood how Chalcondyles' mention of the Greek historians at this point in his second oration might well have

appealed to his audience. Indeed, if we may draw such an implication from his use of the words *hystoriis* in the first oration and *hystoriarum* in the second, Chalcondyles, in his second-year Greek course, may also have taught some Greek history.⁶⁹ History, to quote the famous Italian humanist dictum, was "philosophy teaching by example," and one should recall that Padua was at this time a famous center of Aristotelian philosophic teaching, though not yet in the original Greek text. Whether Chalcondyles intended parts of his speech to cater to current humanist taste in Florence as well as Padua cannot, of course, be determined.

Chalcondyles concludes his second "inaugural" oration with another appeal to the Paduan students to join their efforts to his own in this venture and thus "to imitate your ancestors." Once more he thanks Bessarion and the signoria (*dominium*) of Venice, as well as the "magnificent rector" and all others who have shown interest in obtaining the chair for him.

To sum up, the document we have sought to analyze, and from which we have quoted the more important passages, is significant for a number of reasons. Though its existence has been noted by one or two modern scholars, it has never hitherto been edited, nor has anyone quoted from it except for some isolated phrases. True, a cursory reading of the text would seem to indicate merely another highly rhetorical, and less elegant than usual, humanist oration. But our analysis, we believe, has provided us with some interesting new data for the study of Italian humanism. To begin with, it provides evidence hitherto lacking about one of the more notable but lesser-known episodes in the transmission of Greek learning,⁷⁰ so basic for the evolution of Renaissance humanism. More concretely, the speech supplies us with, if not one of the first mentions of Hesiod in Renaissance intellectual circles, certainly with the first specific instance of the *teaching* of Hesiod in a Western scholarly institution.

Besides confirming that the (German) scribe Hartmann Schedel was in truth a pupil of Chalcondyles, the document seems to provide evidence, through Schedel's Greek inserted into the text, of the state of his knowledge of Greek at the time he copied down the discourse in 1464, more probably in 1466, or possibly even later.⁷¹ Moreover, by emphasizing Bessarion's primary role in the establishment of this Paduan chair, the oration reemphasizes his devotion to humanist learning and to the welfare of his fellow Greek émigrés. In particular,

it provides a cogent and heretofore unknown example of his, as well as Chalcondyles', unceasing efforts to ameliorate the condition of their unfortunate fellow Greeks under Turkish subjugation, by appealing publicly for aid to the powerful signoria of Venice.⁷²

More directly connected with the sphere of Italian humanism, the discourse, although couched in what to our taste may seem extravagant and at times even empty language, discloses the importance Chalcondyles and other late Byzantines attached to the study of Greek oratory and poetry, as well as history and philosophy.⁷³ From as far back as the time of Cicero, whom Chalcondyles several times cites as being immersed in Greek studies, the Western world identified *humanitas* with *paideia*, the Greek term for education of the young, but in the broad sense of humane culture as a whole.

Chalcondyles' emphasis here on poetry (and at this time one thought primarily of epic more than lyric poetry) and its conjunction with oratory, is particularly interesting because, through the didactic quality of the epic the youth could be provided with ideal, moral models to follow, and in oratory he could put to practical use the virtues thus learned from epic poetry. As for history, Lorenzo Valla had well expressed, for the Italian humanists, its close connection with oratory, in his famous statement that "oratory is the mother of history." Finally, oratory, history, and philosophy were in some sense related by the Italian humanists in their famous dictum, already quoted, that "history is philosophy teaching by example."⁷⁴

That Chalcondyles, a Platonist by inclination, may in subsequent years have taught some aspects of Platonic philosophy at Padua, as he did later in Florence (witness the corroboration in the manuscript's introduction of his advice to Ficino on his translation of Plato), is not entirely to be excluded.⁷⁵ Yet it seems likely that Padua, which originally hired him to teach the Greek language, was more interested in his knowledge of Aristotle than Plato.

Whether Chalcondyles had in mind the various nuances mentioned above in the development of Italian humanism when he delivered his speeches at Padua, cannot, of course, be ascertained. But it is of no little interest, I believe, that in the period of the Paleologan Renaissance, the various subjects here mentioned by Demetrius were all considered important and were studied in sequence, from the so-called *enkyklios paideia* (a difficult term that may be translated here as "encompassing knowledge"), that is, largely grammar, then extending to rhetoric and history, and finally to

philosophy, the capstone of all Byzantine secular learning, just as theology was considered the end of all Byzantine ecclesiastical learning.⁷⁶

Even more important, Chalcondyles' views, though full of tiresome, effusive pride in Greek culture, give *specific* reasons why a knowledge of Greek literature can benefit Latin—for example, in providing a better understanding of the fine points of grammar, in making it possible to acquire a more powerful and elegant style and also more meaningful content and ideas or arguments (*argumentis*). (An excellent field for investigation in this respect would be the influence of the greatest of ancient rhetoricians, Hermogenes,⁷⁷ on the West via the Greek refugee-humanists, and also the influence on the Renaissance of the textual emendations made in the ancient Greek works, especially the plays, by the Palaeologan scholars, Triklinios, Magister, and Moschopoulos.⁷⁸

Finally, though the discourse is written in not very elegant Latin and in a language not native to Chalcondyles, we must mention here an important point almost entirely overlooked by modern Renaissance historians—that in order to understand the full implications of the Western revival of Greek, we must try to learn more about the style of late Byzantine—that is, Palaeologan—rhetoric, the modern study of which is still in its infancy but some elements of which are, I strongly suspect, manifested in this speech of Chalcondyles. For as one important nineteenth-century Italian scholar, Ferrai, put it—and I would put it even more strongly—Chalcondyles' teaching at Padua and Florence is an echo of "the last Byzantine Hellenism."⁷⁹

Although I am not aware of any extant Byzantine orations given in Constantinople upon the assumption of a university chair, a careful study of the many encomia delivered before the Byzantine imperial court on an emperor's enthronement, on an emperor's death, or on the city of Constantinople itself, would, I believe, show certain parallels between them and this discourse of Chalcondyles.⁸⁰ Of course, it should again be stressed that Chalcondyles had taught in Italy before coming to Padua and that there are very probably Latin influences to be found here as well as Byzantine. Nevertheless, to really comprehend the manner in which the Italian humanists received the Greek classics, and the interpretation they attached to them, it would seem necessary to know more of the way in which the Byzantine preservers and transmitters of this heritage organized and, in particular, taught these classics; for Greek literature came to the

West only through the long filter of Byzantium, whose teaching and appreciation of classical Greek learning itself underwent several phases, culminating in the so-called Palaeologan Renaissance. Byzantium was not merely a repository of ancient Greek learning: it was in some ways also a modifier of it.

At any rate, there can be no doubt that for Chalcondyles, a son of Byzantium transplanted to the West, a thorough knowledge of all the main aspects of Greek culture, of "eloquence" in the broadest Western humanist sense and not merely in the narrow technical one, was central to the more perfect development of Latin literature in the Renaissance. As Chalcondyles repeatedly affirms, if to the eminently practical Romans the study of Greek literature and history—he even points out that the Romans sent their sons to be educated in Greece⁸¹—was found to be so helpful, why could these same studies, as exemplified in his course of grammar, oratory, and poetry, not be equally profitable to the later Quattrocento Italian humanists, who prized that civilization above all? With this argument Demetrius Chalcondyles of Athens made to his always pragmatic Veneto-Paduan audience his most telling point for the benefits to be derived from the study of Greek.

The career of Demetrius Chalcondyles deserves more attention than has hitherto been accorded it, for his contribution to the development of Italian humanism matches that of the greatest of Byzantine humanists in the West—Chrysoloras, Argyropoulos, and Musurus. While to Chrysoloras goes the honor of instituting the systematic teaching of Greek in the West during the Renaissance, to Argyropoulos a good deal of the credit for transmuting Florentine humanism from an emphasis on rhetoric to one on metaphysical philosophy, and to Musurus the palm for the broadest erudition and publication of the greatest number of Greek first editions, it was Chalcondyles whose teaching career outlasted that of any other Greek émigré in the West and, more important, took place in three major centers of the Italian Renaissance—Padua, Florence, and Milan—when they were all at or near the pinnacle of their humanistic achievement.

TRANSLATION OF CHALCONDYLES' DISCOURSES
ON THE INAUGURATION OF GREEK STUDIES
AT PADUA UNIVERSITY (1463)*

[Preface of the scribe: Demetrius the Athenian was that Greek who publicly expounded to us at Padua first the *Erotemata*, then Hesiod. Marsilio Ficino, in his preface to the works of Plato, makes mention of Demetrius in this manner: "Lest perhaps you think, friend reader, that such a great work is edited without design, know that when I had composed it [and] before I published it, I consulted several critics about this work: Demetrius the Athenian no less [expert] in philosophy and eloquence than others of the race of Attica, Georgius Antonius [and] Joannes-Battista, Florentines who are most skilled in the Latin and Greek languages."]

Magnificent rector, distinguished doctors, and you other most erudite men: Although I do not see that I am able to make a speech on the study of Greek letters worthy either of the subject or of your ears, I—very little experienced as I am in such things and, moreover, with little talent and slight learning, [although] I can give little satisfaction to you very learned and wise men—nevertheless, because the newness in particular of the subject and especially the custom of inaugural addresses seem to require it, have undertaken this task (as they say) with a dull Minerva [i.e. without skill].

Assuredly, most cultivated and wise men, you have accustomed yourselves to exercise in all things the greatest courtesy (*humanitatem*) and gentleness. But may you be willing to show this same kindness to me, a new man (*homini novo*), who is of mediocre erudition in Latin letters, and may you hear my speech with a cheerful frame of mind.

When, then, through the most illustrious and outstanding authority of the Venetians, at the request of the most reverend my lord cardinal, personal legate (*de latere*) of the Apostolic See, and by the favor and help of the Magnificent Rector and of the excellent scholars, I was accordingly appointed publicly to lecture on (*legere*) Greek letters, for that reason it seems appropriate to mention how much

*As recorded (in Latin) by his pupil, the subsequently famous German physician, Hartmann Schedel. The above is my translation.

usefulness, style (*ornamento*), and perfection these studies [of Greek] offer to Latin letters, and how much they have explained and do clarify Latin. It does not seem necessary to say anything more.

[Schedel's heading: Another preamble of the same Greek in the following year—that is, 1464—in the *studium* of Padua.]

Today is for me a most joyful and, at the same time, a very sad day: most happy indeed that such a gathering of very famous and learned men has deigned to be present for my discourse. If in any way this speech can be worthy and pleasing to your ears I shall truly have accomplished nothing happier for me; nothing sweeter is more desirable; sad, indeed, because with so little talent and mediocre knowledge, and with such meager and poor eloquence (*eloquencia*), I am about to deliver an oration before men who are the most famous and distinguished of any place on earth and are endowed with every kind of wisdom, knowledge, and eloquence. Who could be either so eloquent or able in knowledge and ability? Who would not be numbed before your gaze—you who are so important and wise, who would not tremble or hesitate? But since I recall your knowledge, your humanity and gentleness toward all, I have not in the least doubted that you will show yourselves to be sympathetic and well disposed even to a man who is new (*homini novo*) and completely unaccustomed, and who has very little experience (*exercitato*) in matters of this kind, and is learned in small degree in Latin letters, even if my speech is thin and worthy neither of the dignity of the occasion, about which it is important to say something, nor worthy of wisdom (*sapientia*). When, therefore, through the very illustrious and renowned authority of the Venetians (*inclito dominio Venetorum*), at the request of the most reverend my lord cardinal, personal legate (*legati de latere*), and by the favor and help, desire, and agreement of the distinguished rector and excellent scholars I was appointed publicly to teach Greek letters, it seemed good to say something not off the subject—how much utility, style, and perfection (*ornamenti perfectionisque*) they bring, and how the study of Greek literature has explained and does explain Latin letters. Therefore, magnificent and most kind men, I should like you to consider this matter for a little while here, and that you should want to listen to my discourse, according to your custom, benignly and with cheerful disposition.

[Schedel: Here begins the speech of the famous Greek presented in

his inaugural lecture (*in principio lecture*) in the famous Paduan gymnasium (i.e. university).]

I believe that none of you is ignorant that the Latins received every kind of liberal arts (*liberalium artium*) from the Greeks. And it is also well known that the originators of all these arts were Greek and that the very names of the arts were derived from the Greek. So let me begin with the small things themselves and with the very rudiments (*ipsorum elementorum*) of grammar, poetry, the oratorical art, history, logic, mathematics, natural philosophy, medicine, and then of divine science itself—for who, even moderately learned, is unaware that they [the Greeks] were the inventors (*inventores*)? Or that everything or some of the things that were received from others they [the Greeks] themselves made more perfect and then transmitted to the Latins? They [the Greeks] flourished so much in every kind of virtue and learning (*in omni genere virtutis doctrinaque*), that it is well authenticated: to no one did they yield in anything during the time in which they flourished. The Latins, having followed the Greeks even to the very elements of literature, are rightly thought to have excelled other nations in every kind of learning, as in warfare. Since, therefore, they had received literary studies (*studia litterarum*) and every craft (*omnes artes*) and they follow the inventors (*ductores*) themselves [the Greeks], no one could deny that the study of Greek letters offers much fruit to the Latin in every kind of learning.

And about these things, first of all those pertaining to grammar, I shall say something. Since Latin grammar is joined to Greek and seems to depend upon it, how can anyone have a complete grasp (*cognitionem*) of it unless he knows Greek letters? Nor can he know the derivation of many words and their specific meanings, nor the declension of many nouns, nor the quantity of syllables, nor want to speak correctly and elegantly (*recte ac eleganter*) if he is ignorant of Greek letters. No one can say rightly, I believe, that some Latin authors wrote some works concerning these things and that therefore it is not necessary to know Greek literature. For they [the Latin authors] speak thus about these things [Greek letters] so that the learners may have knowledge of them, so that they may not be completely ignorant of them, so that they might speak about this not imperfectly regarding those who have touched a bit there as at the fountain itself (so to speak)—as if anyone desirous of quenching his thirst would seek the swamp rather than the fountain and, being

hungry, would prefer to have dessert instead of solid food! In the same way I think this should be said about those things that seem to pertain to poets, oratory, and every branch of speaking (*genus dicendi*), since no one would maintain that a poem or an oration can be written without nouns (*nominibus*), correct diction (*recta locutione*), figures [of speech], brilliant style (*coloribus*), and subject matter (*argumentis*). And since both skills have been handed down abundantly and copiously by them and have been put to use in their [Latin] poems, orations, and histories most fully and perfectly, the old Latin authors (*auctores*), the poets as well as the orators and historians, confirm my opinion: none of them [Latin authors] was ignorant of Greek letters. Indeed, several (*complures*) of them venerated Greek literature so thoroughly that one wonders whether they knew Greek or Latin literature better.

It is reported that M. Cicero himself confessed that he always joined Greek to Latin in order to serve his purpose and that he made no distinction between a knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages. But you know these things far better than I. And it is maintained that Brutus left to posterity letters written most elegantly in Greek, most weighty and full of meaning (*gravissimas sententiosissimasque*). Moreover, Favorinus the Latin was an outstanding orator, as testifies Philostratus in his book which he composed on the lives of the Sophists, and many others seem to have turned out to be very expert in Greek literature, then, whose names would take too long to enumerate. Nor would these most learned men [Latins] have devoted so much effort to this literature if they had not believed they could secure a great benefit from it, and they realized that Greek literature was an aid and a [rhetorical] embellishment (*ornamento*) to Latin literature and to their own works, as can be clearly recognized from the opinion of Horace, a most serious and very good poet, who speaks thus about the Greeks: "The Muse bestowed on the Greeks talent (*ingenium*), gave the Greeks talent to speak with a round mouth (*ore rotundo*) [i.e. to speak elegantly]." And elsewhere, urging the Latins to these studies, he exhorts them, "Turn over the Grecian models both night and day." What should I say about philosophy itself, regarding which those who apply themselves chiefly in their own fountain of philosophy [i.e. Thomism?] should learn this literature [Greek] in order that they might understand them [their own works] more fully and more correctly? Indeed, even if one may gather no other fruit from these studies, one can gain a better understanding of the texts themselves of Aristotle, which are otherwise accessible only

in rather bad and inept Latin translations. I omit to note how much sweetness (*succi*) and fruit in this philosophy they can in abundance derive from other Greek books, and how much better and more fully they can understand the thoughts and opinions of other philosophers through these same Greek authors. They [the Latins] seem to see them [Greek thoughts and opinions] now, as it were, without the shadow of darkness [when they know Greek].

In the same way, I might speak about medicine, astrology [astronomy], and other arts, since the Greeks assert that they were the founders of all of them and since most things, I think, in those disciplines (*scientiis*) cannot very easily be understood unless one has Greek literature. Wherefore, distinguished and learned youths, you who have expended much strength and effort on virtues and the liberal arts (*virtutibus liberalibusque artibus*), having followed the examples of your old authors and many reasons (*rationibus*), may you be willing to devote yourself with all your strength to Greek letters and to gather from these letters a delightful fruit—a fruit that nourishes the mind. But if you possess a ready and eager enough mind, you will perceive indeed that I have advised you correctly. And then you will be neither more dissatisfied (if I am not mistaken) because you began them, nor displeased because you began to study those letters rather late. Nor, moreover, will you have great difficulty, as perhaps you thought, in learning this literature, since these [Greek] letters seem to bear no small similarity and relationship to Latin letters.

And if someone in some manner should believe that those letters are difficult to learn, nevertheless you should not avoid any kind of toil or difficulty because of the hope of fruit and usefulness (*utilitatis*) to be derived from them. This chiefly you should keep in mind: that nothing good can be acquired without labor and difficulty, as Hesiod the poet also says: [a garbled line of the Greek text of Hesiod is inserted here]. Which verses one may interpret thus: "To virtue the gods (*superi*) joined much sweat."* Who is able at the same time to attribute vice to himself? And I, indeed, who intend to teach you these letters, God willing, although I do not know that I possess the knowledge to teach you the higher and more difficult things, yet I shall bend every effort to satisfy you in this beginning course in grammar (*in hiis principiis grammaticae*) and in the poets and orators, and insofar as I can, to disclose a shorter and better way to attain

*Here in the MS a Latin transliteration of the garbled Greek text is also given: "Arete drosa te apro peden ethasca tin men ti kako tis ike ikinis sneletha" (see original text, below).



Portrait of Cardinal Bessarion from an illuminated manuscript in the Grottaferrata Monastery. (See pp. 238-39.)

these letters. Finally, I promise I shall put at your service all my efforts in these letters. It remains for all of you to turn your attention to these letters and through your skill and vigilance to reflect that I am ready and eager to teach you. On the other hand, once again this lectureship (*lectura*) is instituted at this famous university for its honor, expansion, and utility. You and I together should first give great and undying thanks to the most illustrious and celebrated lordship of the Venetians which because of its generosity, readily granted the request for this lectureship.

Then we should give thanks to the most reverend lord cardinal and patriarch of Constantinople, *legatus de latere* of the Apostolic See and my matchless lord, who, since he is most skilled in both languages (*in utraque lingua*) and very wise, and since he understands how much fruit these letters can offer, demonstrate, and produce, at once accepted the wish (*voluntatem*) of the university. Without any delay whatever, he did not at all neglect to ask [the assent of] the most illustrious lordship and to secure it at once. May omnipotent God always keep the dominion [of Venice] with Him, safe and prosperous—both because of their [the Venetians'] piety and worship of Him, and because of the very good will and mind they direct against the abominable, monstrous, and impious barbarian Turks on behalf of the faith and for the benefit (*utilitate*) of all Christians and the recovery of pitiable Greece (*Gracie misere*) which, most cruelly overrun and oppressed by them, suppliantly implores the aid of all Christians, and most of all of the Latins, and from these Latins entreats this reward (*remuneracionem*). So that, just as she [Greece] had expended in their behalf [the Latins] all of her most precious and outstanding possessions liberally and without any parsimony, and had restored with her hand and force of arms the state of Italy [*Italia*], long ago oppressed by the Goths, they [the Latins] should in the same way now be willing to raise up prostrate and afflicted Greece and liberate it by arms from the hands of the barbarians. Which Greece will obtain, especially from the most illustrious lordship of the Venetians through its [Venice's] authority and most holy and pious wish, to be liberated from the infidels with God's favor and aid and restored to her pristine state, [then] Greece will give undying thanks to Venice (*dominio*) for such lasting benefit. And she [Greece] will think that it [Venice] has appeared for her salvation, just like those who saw Christ descend into hell for their liberation from evil, as in Dante's *Inferno*.

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meagerness of my learning (*doctrine*) and talent (*ingenii*). Nor do I seek to instruct you because I think you are ignorant of these things, but in order to keep the custom in an inaugural address of this kind (*in huiusmodi principiis*) and so as not at all to seem to have neglected my duty of exhorting youth toward these studies. But even though I should accomplish nothing worthy either of your expectation or your dignity, still may you extend, in accordance with your humanity and custom (*humanitate ac consuetudine*), forbearance toward me who, though troubled by various ill-fortunes and misfortunes (*variis casibus ac infortuniis*), have not, indeed, attained mediocre learning; nor, if I, being able, were to have much greater learning and talent, should I think that I could ever satisfy such men [as you]. May I thank you, men of such wisdom and dignity, because you have so kindly and courteously been willing to hear me.

[End of the first speech of a very distinguished Greek.]

[Schedel: Second oration of a Greek, at the beginning of studies, delivered in Padua in the year of our Lord 1464, the 10th day of November.]

Magnificent Rector, distinguished doctors, and other illustrious men, I would wish to have the strength of talent and learning, along with eloquence (*eloquencia*), to be able to say something about the study of Greek letters, something suitable to Greek letters which might indeed be worthy of your expectation. For in this way I would think that the worthiness and usefulness of those studies might be adequately explained and, I should think, satisfy your wisdom in some way. But since I see in me small learning and very slight eloquence, I fear that I may seem inept in speaking to you serious men—men most skilled in this branch of knowledge [i.e., oratory]. [I fear] that I may say something worse than the subject of the occasion requires. But when I consider how you have always been benign and humane to all accustomed to speak here, and that you grant to everyone as much kindness as the talent and ability of each seems to warrant, I, profiting therefore from your kindness and not from my erudition, have decided to say here what should be said about these studies, especially since it behooves me to follow the custom, now long observed and approved, in these inaugural addresses (*principiis*). Therefore, to make a beginning here, I think that the study of Greek literature has been of great use and rhetorical embellishment

(*ornamento*) in the first place (*in primis*) for the human race, and that no one imbued with some study of letters is ignorant. For who could be so inexpert and so uncultivated in liberal arts (*liberalium artium*) as not to know that every branch (*genus*) of knowledge was cultivated and flourished especially among the Greeks, who were the originators and cultivators of almost all the sciences? Anyone may easily recognize how much all the nations of the earth follow them, with how much veneration they have pursued them [the Greek authors]. The Greeks, had they not been skilled in these things [Greek literature], never would have been able (unless I am mistaken) to attain perfection in knowledge, when in this literature the bases and principles of all the sciences are established and discussed and thoroughly interpreted. The more they became learned and expert in these sciences, the more they burned with zeal for the study of these [Greek] letters. Just as, in fact, the Romans, who shone no less, perhaps, in the liberal arts than in arms in past times, clearly demonstrate.

Because almost all of these [Romans] understood their own language no less than Greek, and they preferred to express the feelings of their minds and the meaning (*rerum vim*) and nature of things more often in Greek than in Latin. For no one who observes is undecided about this: the books of almost all the most worthy authors are filled with Greek words and opinions, so that, not only did they realize that this fruit could be obtained from Greek literature, but they also saw that they drew from it a fuller knowledge of their own language, since none of them [the Latins] was ignorant that Latin eloquence took its origin from Greek [eloquence], and that it [Latin eloquence] had, as it were, a parent [in Greek]. What should I say to men skilled in every kind of ability, who, each one in his own art [skill] would like to write and bring something to light? How much fruit and how much fertility can they draw from the Greek sources, as divine Cicero declared! Since each man may reflect on the [Greek] sources (*fontibus*) in his mind, and since we do have very worthy examples of those first famous men before our eyes, I cannot, indeed, be astonished enough. Why have so many of these people been filled with idleness and laziness so that they completely neglect these literary studies [Greek]?

But if unlearned men unskilled in good letters do so [i.e., do not study Greek], and they do not take delight in the liberal arts or do not want to praise talent (*ingenium*), that seems not in the least remarkable, for such men do not at all like to devote themselves to literary studies — indeed, all studies seem to be the greatest burden for them

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[the unskilled]. But they are not averse to them, like frenzied (*frenesi*) captives wanting to consult skilled doctors or any others for their health. But when I see erudite and learned men do this [not take up this study], I am indeed overcome by the greatest astonishment. For, by the immortal gods, these letters can offer both knowledge and a fuller and certainly stronger end (*sermonem pleniorum ac certe firmiter*) and no little fruit in all branches of knowledge; add to this embellishment and fullness [of expression] (*ornamentum et copiam*) in many other things and also in historical matters.

What is it that causes one to avoid these studies? Work, of course, and the difficulty of the undertaking or the extremely great distances involved (*locorum maxima intervalla*). But it is a shame for men endowed with virtue and skill to want to avoid anything good and to shun virtue on account of some one (*aliquid*) of these [i.e. work, difficulty, or distance], even should we be incited to this [pursuit of virtue and the good] by nothing else than the examples of those old and famous men whom I have enumerated, both Latin and Greek, who, for the sake of learning, traveled through almost the whole world, terrified by no danger or task.

The Romans, moreover, who were masters on land and sea [and] learned, in addition, at home and in school in almost every branch of knowledge (*scientia*) that exists, were accustomed to send their children to Athens. But you who do not need to undergo great labor or a long journey for the sake of these studies, up to now have you not neglected and hesitated to seize (*arripere*) them? To barbarians (*barbaris*) unskilled in every good art, this laziness may be permitted, this inertia allowed, I say. But I should not like this to be said arrogantly by me, or for you to think [that] of me. For I do not arrogate to myself so much authority (*provinciam*), nor am I so lofty that I should not be able to understand that I am of little importance. I have said these things, accordingly, to show that those early and almost divine men avoided no labor, no greatest distance of places, for the sake of virtue (*virtutis*). We, however, stand so far from them that at times we seem to condemn and reject the things that [for us] are very close at hand and which they found situated far from their fatherlands yet bent every effort to acquire. Moreover, the matter [of learning Greek] is not so arduous so that whoever wants to devote himself to this literature can profit much in a short time, inasmuch as it [Greek literature] has such an accord (*convenientiam*) and so great a relationship (*necessitudinem*) (as I should say) with Latin, that whoever knows the one may very easily acquire the

other—which we also learn from many experiences. For some foreigners (*externi*) have wanted to learn this literature who seem rather distant (*alieni*) from them [i.e. Greek letters], and have very rapidly acquired not a little proficiency in these letters.

Wherefore you young people, who are in the most flourishing period of your life in which you are able to learn much, and who burn with a desire for all manner of knowledge, exert yourselves and add these studies to your others, and may you in this imitate your ancestors. Gather eagerly the fruit offered to you from this literature. You will always find me, in teaching of these letters, to be most eager to help you, and my small ability, whatever it may be, and my teaching (*doctrina*) of these letters and finally all the strength within [me], I certainly intend to expend (*impendere*) most freely. Know for certain (*pro certo habetote*) that I shall make you learned in the study of these letters, and in a short time I shall perhaps provide [you with] no mediocre knowledge of them.

And for the privilege which this distinguished university has conferred upon me by its consent and request (*consensu et rogatu*) and which I obtained by the intercession (*intercessione*) of the most serene, my lord the most remarkable and wise Nicene cardinal, from the most illustrious and munificent lordship of the Venetians, I shall return this reward and favor with all my ability.

I give the thanks I can, not those I should, to you, most magnificent and humane rector, to whom I shall always confess that I am bound on account of your singular virtues and your outstanding learning, and to you, most wise doctors, and to the rest of the men because of your kindness and enthusiasm in obtaining this lectureship of mine—to you men endowed with virtue and learning—because you have deigned to listen to me so kindly and with benevolent mind.

End

[Schedel: Thus end happily the speeches of the very distinguished Greek, my teacher in the *studium* of Padua, at the beginning of his lectureship, which were very elegantly read aloud. I, Hartmann Schedel of Nuremberg, Paduan doctor of arts and medicine, have written them down at the beginning of the course of study, from the hand of the aforesaid Greek when he taught the beginning course in Greek letters. Praise be to God.]

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The Last Step:
Western Recovery and Translation of the Greek
Church Fathers and Their First Printed
Editions in the Renaissance

An important aspect of Byzantine-Latin relations long neglected by modern scholars is the recovery by the West during the Renaissance of the entire corpus of the Greek Church Fathers. In contrast to widespread concern with the revival of ancient Greek learning, the development of the Western Renaissance interest in Patristic Greek writings has hitherto received comparatively little attention. Nevertheless, there seems to be no question that the more prominent of the early Quattrocento Florentine humanists—Niccoli, Traversari, and to a lesser extent Bruni and Poggio—in the period between the teaching of Chrysoloras in Florence (1397–1400) and the advent of the Greeks at the Council of Florence (1438), were attracted almost as much by writings of the ancient Greek Fathers as by the classical Greek learning of antiquity. This chapter will concentrate on the initial phase of the process of the Greek Fathers' recovery during the early Renaissance and then, more particularly, on the printing of the first editions of these Fathers, starting with 1470, the probable date of the first edition, and extending to the later sixteenth century, by which time the entire corpus had been disseminated throughout the West.¹

As we have seen, Greek was largely lost to the medieval Western world; but some works of the Greek Fathers were known in Latin translation.² Indeed, we might suspect that the medieval West knew somewhat more about these Greek writings than has yet been realized. At any rate, among the best known of such works were the sermons and commentaries of Chrysostom, Basil, and a few of Origen. Familiar also, again in translation, were Greek ascetic and moral

discourses of Basil, Ephraem, and especially Chrysostom's *De Patientia Job*, as were the church histories of the fourth-century Byzantine, Eusebius. In pure theology only two Greek Patristic works seem to appear repeatedly in Western medieval literature: John of Damascus in the twelfth century (with his Aristotelian approach), and the mystical writings of Pseudo-Dionysius, whose corpus had been widely circulated (as we have seen in chap. 6) from John Scotus Erigena's time onward. But Dionysius was, technically at least, not viewed in the same light as the other Greek Fathers, since he was believed to have been a disciple of St. Paul.³

Renaissance humanists naturally drew heavily on this earlier medieval Greek tradition. Yet though humanist interests, in particular those of the editors of the Greek first editions, were often similar to those of the Scholastics, they were in some ways quite different. A few theories may be adduced for the changes wrought by and in Renaissance attitudes toward these works. Early Italian humanist translators of the Greek Fathers—with the possible exception of Ambrogio Traversari—were in general more interested than medieval scholars had been in the style of the works. Whereas the medieval translator (William of Moerbeke, for instance) had produced word-for-word versions, the Renaissance humanists, in an effort to reproduce the eloquence of the style, made freer translations which, in many cases (though not always), were more faithful to the content of the text. One may recall in this respect the dispute involving the bishop of Burgos in Spain who, lacking any knowledge of Greek, in 1430 criticized humanist Leonardo Bruni's translation of a classical Greek text, preferring instead the Scholastic, more literal rendering of William of Moerbeke.⁴

The humanists in some instances also effected a change in attitudes toward certain works of the Greek Fathers which had for centuries been considered heretical. Notable is the case of Origen—his biblical *Commentaries* had, of course, always been widely read—many more of whose works now became popular in the Renaissance largely because of the Neoplatonic ideas embodied therein and because of his felicitous manner of expression.⁵

To take another example, the humanists also reoriented medieval views toward the Byzantine Eusebius' *Preparatio Evangelica*, in which that author had sought to point out the precursors of the Christian Gospel.⁶ However, humanistic attitudes toward certain other Greek Fathers, Chrysostom and Basil in particular, differed little from the

Scholastic, since their "orthodoxy" had never been questioned—a circumstance reflected in the many translations of their works.

The leading advocate of the revival of Christian antiquity in the early Italian Renaissance was certainly the Florentine Ambrogio Traversari. It is to him that we owe the translation into Latin, many for the first time, of more than twenty Greek Patristic works. As a monk (later minister-general of the Order) of the Camaldolese convent of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Florence, Traversari early became fascinated by ancient learning, both Greek and Latin, but with particular interest in the Greek Patristic writings. According to his own testimony, he began to learn Greek on his own, not through formal study with the humanists but simply by comparing individual words from the Greek Psalter and the New Testament with their corresponding Latin versions.⁷

A Byzantine refugee from Constantinople, Demetrius Scaranus (he has been almost completely slighted by historians), was of considerable help to Traversari in his work on the Patristic Greek texts.⁸ Scaranus, who spent the last decade or more of his life at Ambrogio's monastery, performed for Traversari the difficult but fundamental task of transcribing the sometimes almost undecipherable manuscripts of centuries past. These Traversari had managed to secure either directly from the Greek East or from the libraries of Italian or Byzantine humanists in Italy, such as Chrysoloras, Guarino, Corbinelli, or Filelfo.⁹ But Scaranus was probably more than a scribe, if we can believe a letter of Traversari to his supporter in his Patristic venture, Niccolò Niccoli.¹⁰

Contrary to what is sometimes believed, Traversari did not study Greek with the Byzantine Manuel Chrysoloras.¹¹ Nonetheless, the two did later meet and the famous Byzantine professed much esteem for Traversari's learning. Indeed, in view of Chrysoloras' similar interests in Greek Patristic writing as well as the classics (see Epigraph, the quotation from him stressing similarities between old Rome and Constantinople), Chrysoloras encouraged Traversari in his project of translating the Fathers. Traversari, it would seem, unlike many other Italian humanists, was interested in the Greek Fathers not for antiquarian reasons but, more importantly as he saw it, for the light they could cast on beliefs and practices of the early period of Christianity, when the Eastern and Western churches, ecclesiastically and culturally, were still one. Indeed, in 1424 he even translated a late Byzantine treatise (which he dedicated to the pope), the



Portrait of Ambrogio Traversari, from "De Vita et Moribus Philosophorum" (manuscript, Plut. 65.22). Courtesy of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence. (See pp. 246-47.)



Manuel Chrysoloras, engraving in I. Bullart, *Académie des sciences et des arts* (Amsterdam, 1682). (See pp. 246-47.)

Adversus Graecos of the fourteenth-century Latinophile Byzantine, Manuel Calecas. Evidently, it was the practical purpose of Traversari to promote the union of the churches through expounding a near-contemporary Byzantine theologian's support for the Latin view of the double procession of the Holy Spirit.¹²

Among some notable Latin translations of the Greek Fathers made by Traversari—treatises, letters, and sermons—were those of his favorite John Chrysostom (whose eloquence especially attracted him), of Basil, Athanasius, Gregory of Nazianzus, Ephraem the Syrian, and the Pseudo-Dionysius. He also translated (apparently at the suggestion of Chrysoloras) a very important work of early Byzantine monasticism, sixth-century John Climacus' *Ladder of Paradise*.¹³ As a participant in the theological disputations at the Council of Florence, Traversari acted as an official interpreter and sometimes, because of his known sympathy for and understanding of the Byzantines, was called upon to serve as a kind of mediator or conciliator between the two parties.¹⁴ His knowledge of Byzantine theology, derived from his study of the Greek Fathers, thus had its pragmatic side, though at this council his allegiance was certainly to the papacy.

Having discussed the work of the initiator of Renaissance interest in the Greek Fathers, let us turn to the printing of the first editions of these works—an undertaking that would enable them to be more easily and widely disseminated. What was the chief criterion of selection for the first Greek Patristic works to be printed, at least for the first that seems to have appeared, Basil's famous *Discourse to Christian Youth on Studying the Greek Classics*? This work, discovered—or rather rediscovered—in the West about 1400, was first translated into Latin (after 1410) by Leonardo Bruni of Florence, pupil of the Byzantine professor Manuel Chrysoloras.¹⁵

Where could the humanists, whose zeal for classical learning was not infrequently under attack, find more powerful vindication for study of the classical, and especially the pagan Greek, literary heritage than in this work of Basil? Indeed, the prime purpose of Basil's *Discourse* had been precisely to justify (with distinct qualification) study of the Greek classics by showing their utility for the Christian believer of Basil's own time.¹⁶ The work thus gave cogent support to the Renaissance humanist emphasis on the *studia humanitatis*—a curriculum of study that stressed, among other things, classical literature as a preparation for the study of Sacred Scripture. It could hardly have been coincidental, then, that Basil's work, which had



Head of Leonardo Bruni (probably taken from his death mask), from Bruni's funeral monument by Bernardo Rossellino in the Church of Santa Croce, Florence. (See pp. 247-48.)

circulated widely in manuscript, was (apparently) the first Latin translation of a Greek Father's work to be printed, in 1470 or possibly 1471) in Venice,¹⁷ soon to become Italy's leading printing center.

The enormous popularity of Basil's *Discourse*, not only because of its vindication of classical learning, but also because of its emphasis on the similarity of Christian and classical moral precepts and its praise for the classical literary style (especially its simplicity and directness), is indicated in that, before 1500, many incunabula editions (in Latin) were printed, including several Italian, German, Spanish, and even a Hungarian one.¹⁸ It may, in fact, have been the first and only Greek Patristic work published in fifteenth-century Spain.¹⁹ As for the Hungarian edition, it attests further to the range of Matteo Corvinus's humanistic patronage.²⁰ A chief source of information on which Greek Patristic works were first printed and why, is the prefatory letter of dedication customarily inserted at the beginning of each work by the editor and/or publisher.²¹ Thus, in Bruni's prefatory letter to his translation of Basil's *Discourse*, dedicated to Florentine chancellor Coluccio Salutati (and which was repeatedly printed), the purpose of the translation—justification for Christian study of the classics—is clearly indicated. Such prefatory letters to printed editions naturally express praise for the person to whom the work is dedicated and, of course, explain the significance of the work printed. It is these letters, along with the text itself, which constitute our chief evidence for the attitudes of the editor and, perhaps, the publisher.

The second most popular Greek Patristic work published was, it seems, Eusebius' *Preparatio Evangelica*, and this again evidently on utilitarian grounds. Eusebius' remarkable affirmation that the Neoplatonic ideas of the Greeks were derived from the Hebrews, provided, for the humanists, still another argument for the study of the classics. Eusebius' case differed, however, from that of Basil in that he had long been subject to accusations of Arianism. In any event, the first to translate the *Preparatio* into Latin was the ubiquitous and irascible Cretan émigré, George of Trebizond, who had the work printed in Venice in 1470. In his prefatory letter, George, after praising his patron, Pope Nicholas V, tells us that, because of Eusebius' Arian proclivities, he (George) has, in his translation, "cut off the thorns from the work and left only the roses."²² That George's translation, with its "corrective" editorial comments, was reprinted in numerous incunabula editions would seem to indicate the great



Portrait of George of Trebizond, from J. Boissard, *Bibliotheca sive thesaurus virtutis et gloriae in qui continente . . .* (Frankfurt, 1628). (See pp. 248-49.)

popularity of Eusebius' edition.²³ Still, certain editors preferred the original text to George's "rectified" version.²⁴

George of Trebizond became deeply involved in the philosophic dispute over the respective merits of Plato and Aristotle, begun by the Greeks, especially Gemistos Pletho, at the Council of Florence. He made use, at least indirectly, of Eusebius' *Preparatio* to support the Aristotelian faction. Specifically, he tried through his edition of the *Preparatio* to demonstrate that the "wretched" Platonists had borrowed their "little wisdom" from the Hebrews.²⁵ How widespread this erroneous belief was in the Renaissance is not clear; nor is the opposite view of some later humanists—that the Greeks were older than Moses and could not, therefore, have borrowed from him. But a continuing repugnance for the Byzantines on the part of some Western humanists cannot be ruled out as a factor here.

Despite his heterodox views, Origen, as we have noted, came to enjoy considerable popularity in the Renaissance in Italy and also, later, in the North. However, researchers investigating the first editions of Origen must exercise caution in generalizing about the treatment of his views, especially the heretical ones, in the first printed versions. For, though the humanist Marsilio Ficino and others particularly fond of Origen were evidently discriminating in their use of his philosophy and theology, others, like Matteo Palmieri and Leonardo Dati, seem clearly (if secretly) to have accepted certain heretical views of Origen such as the preexistence of souls.²⁶

In 1475 a Latin version of Origen's *Homilies* appeared and a few years later the Byzantine Theodore Gaza had Origen's *Contra Celsum* brought from Constantinople for Pope Nicholas V. The edition was dedicated to Pope Sixtus IV and the Venetian doge.²⁷ The translator of the work, Christopher Persona, in his preface of 1481, compares Sixtus to Origen in virtue and learning.²⁸ The attractiveness of Origen's views on such questions as the preexistence of souls for humanist proponents of Neoplatonism and of the esoteric and occult is understandable. But the fascinating question this brings up of the so-called rehabilitation of the heretic Origen is not without difficulties. We may recall, for example, the case of Pico della Mirandola, whose arrest was in part occasioned by several suspect theses he propounded, one of which affirmed that it was more reasonable to believe in Origen's salvation than in his damnation.

In their eagerness to disseminate knowledge of the Greek Fathers through the medium of the press and also to further acceptance of

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the classics in their educational and philosophical program, the Italian humanists were gradually enabled to view the Greek Fathers more accurately in their original historical context. Here one recalls the great Lorenzo Valla, whose critical acumen permitted him to demonstrate not only the spuriousness of the Donation of Constantine, and (remarkably) even to point out errors of translation in the version of Jerome's Vulgate Bible, but, more pertinently still, to air his suspicions, on philological-historical grounds, of the common Western view of Dionysius as the disciple of St. Paul. Work recently done on Valla's philological method²⁹ and the new edition of his *Annotationes*³⁰ indicate how the new type of philological analysis enabled Italian humanists to come gradually to a greater understanding not only of the text of many Greek Patristic works but also of the cultural ambience in which they were written. For as a result in no small part of the dogmatic disputes at the Council of Florence and of his contact with the Greek representatives there, Valla had become convinced of the inadequacy of the Scholastic method and the need to substitute for it an exegetical theology based primarily on philological and rhetorical analysis of the biblical text and derived, in the Byzantine manner, from the Patristic commentaries. In this development that went on in Valla's mind, Byzantine influence, as has recently been shown, played an important but hitherto overlooked role.

To turn briefly to northern Europe, the Patristic Greek editions of only two, but two of the greatest, humanists will concern us here—Lefèvre d'Étaples and Erasmus. The French-born Lefèvre differed from the earlier Italian humanists in that he was more concerned with the Greek Apostolic Fathers of the first and second centuries A.D. than with the later, better-known figures of the fourth and early fifth centuries. As he affirms in his prefatory letter to his *Theologia Vivificans* (containing letters of Polycarp and Ignatius and Ambrogio Traversari's translation of the Dionysian corpus—not, surprisingly, that of Ficino),³¹ he preferred the Apostolic Fathers because they lay at or near the very sources of the Christian faith.³² Lefèvre, who seemed to dislike Neoplatonism, viewing it as a corruption of Christianity, disputed Ficino's view that Dionysius was the "crown of Christian theology" and the "summit of Platonic learning."³³ It is interesting, nonetheless, that he believed that Dionysius should be considered not so much a Platonist as an immediate follower of Jesus and Paul—and in that lay his importance. Which raises the specific question whether, or to what extent, Lefèvre knew Byzantine theol-



Portrait of Erasmus, from J. Boissard, *Bibliotheca chalcographica* (Heidelberg, 1669). (See pp. 248-50.)